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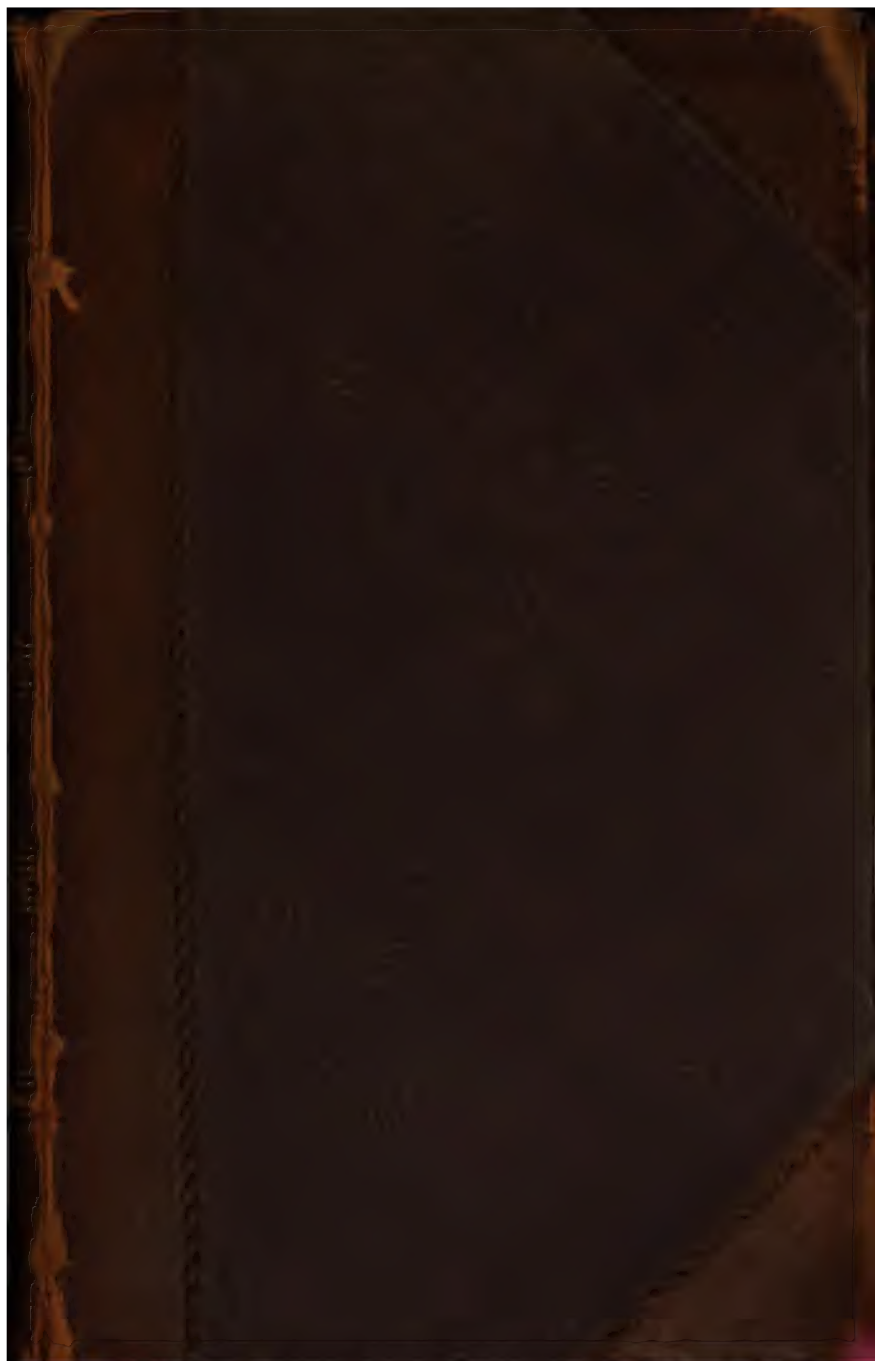
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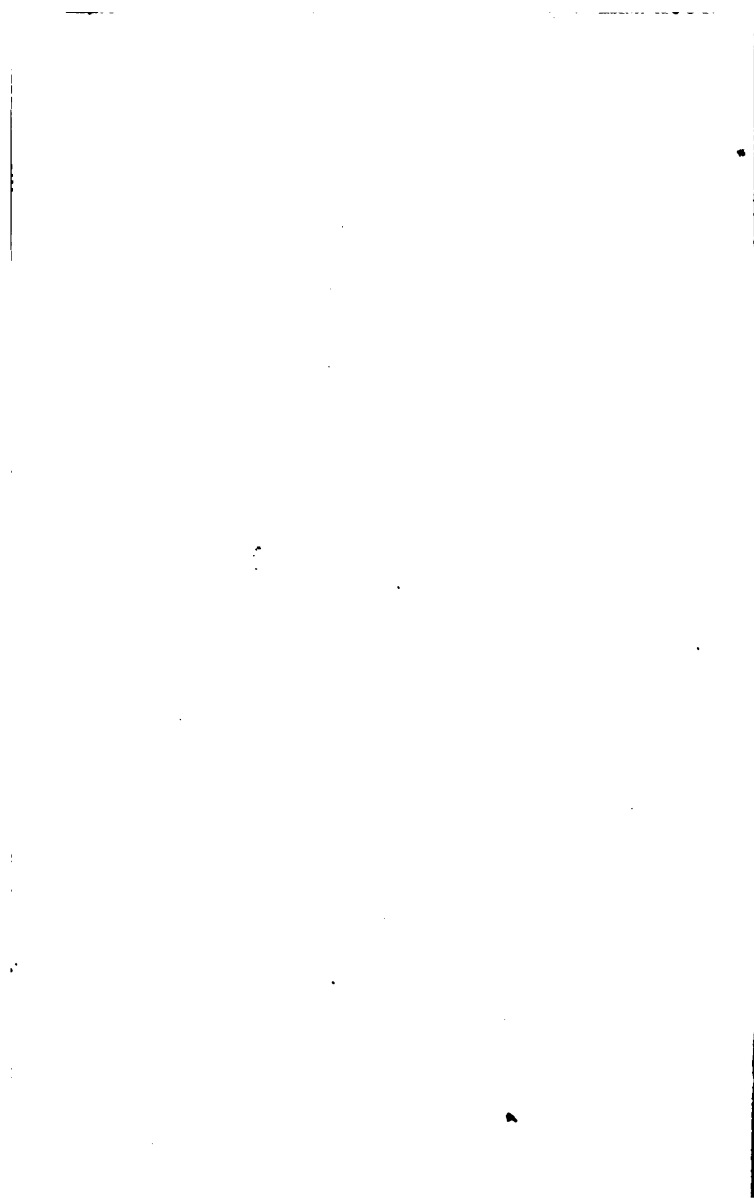
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THE HISTORY
OF THE DEFECTION
OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS
FROM THE SPANISH EMPIRE.



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TRANSLATED

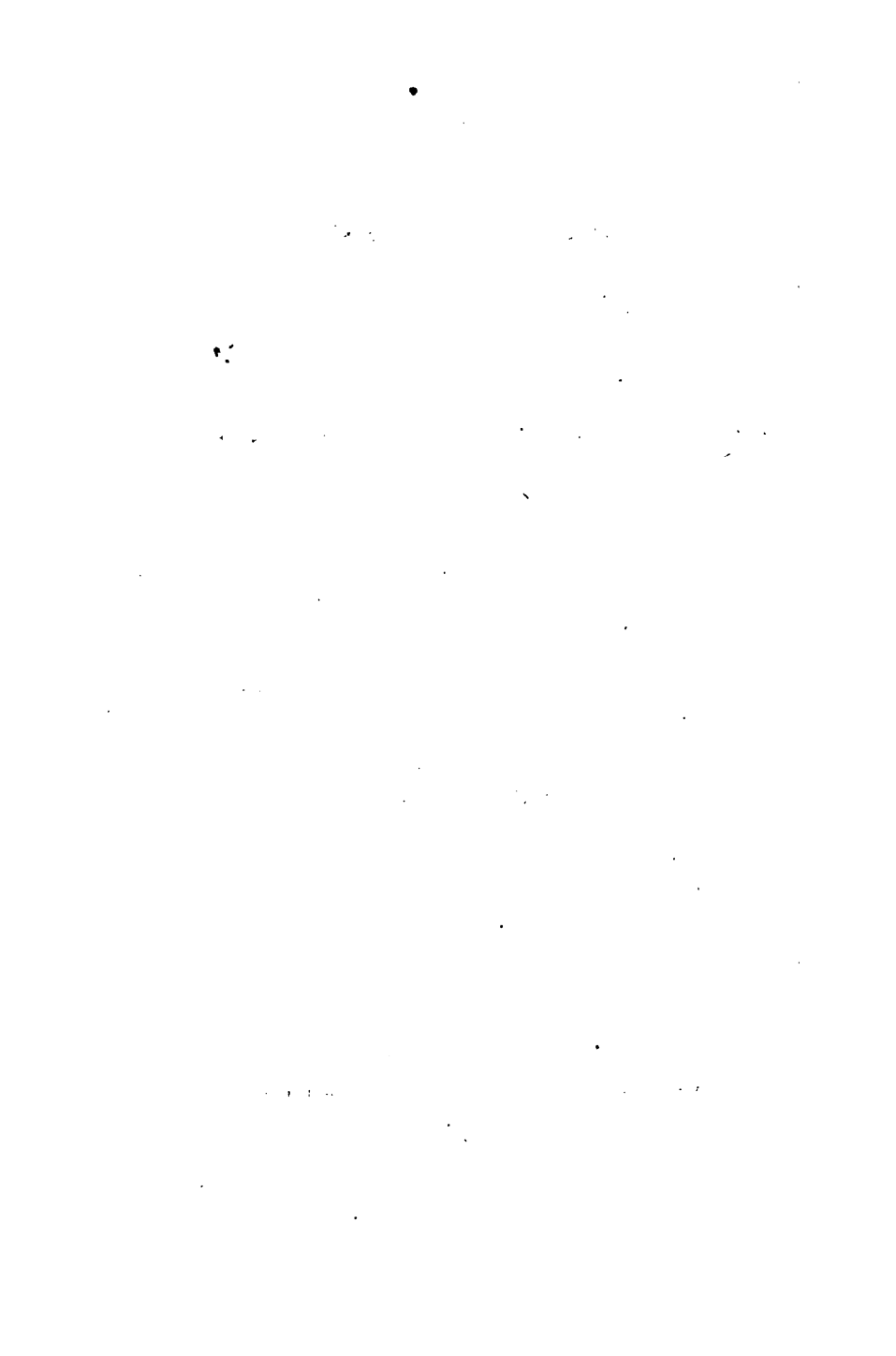
FROM THE ORIGINAL GERMAN OF SCHILLER

BY

L^t. E. B. EASTWICK B^y. n. l.



Frankfort on the Main,
PRINTED BY BENJAMIN KREBS
1844.



TO
SIR CHARLES FORBES BARONET

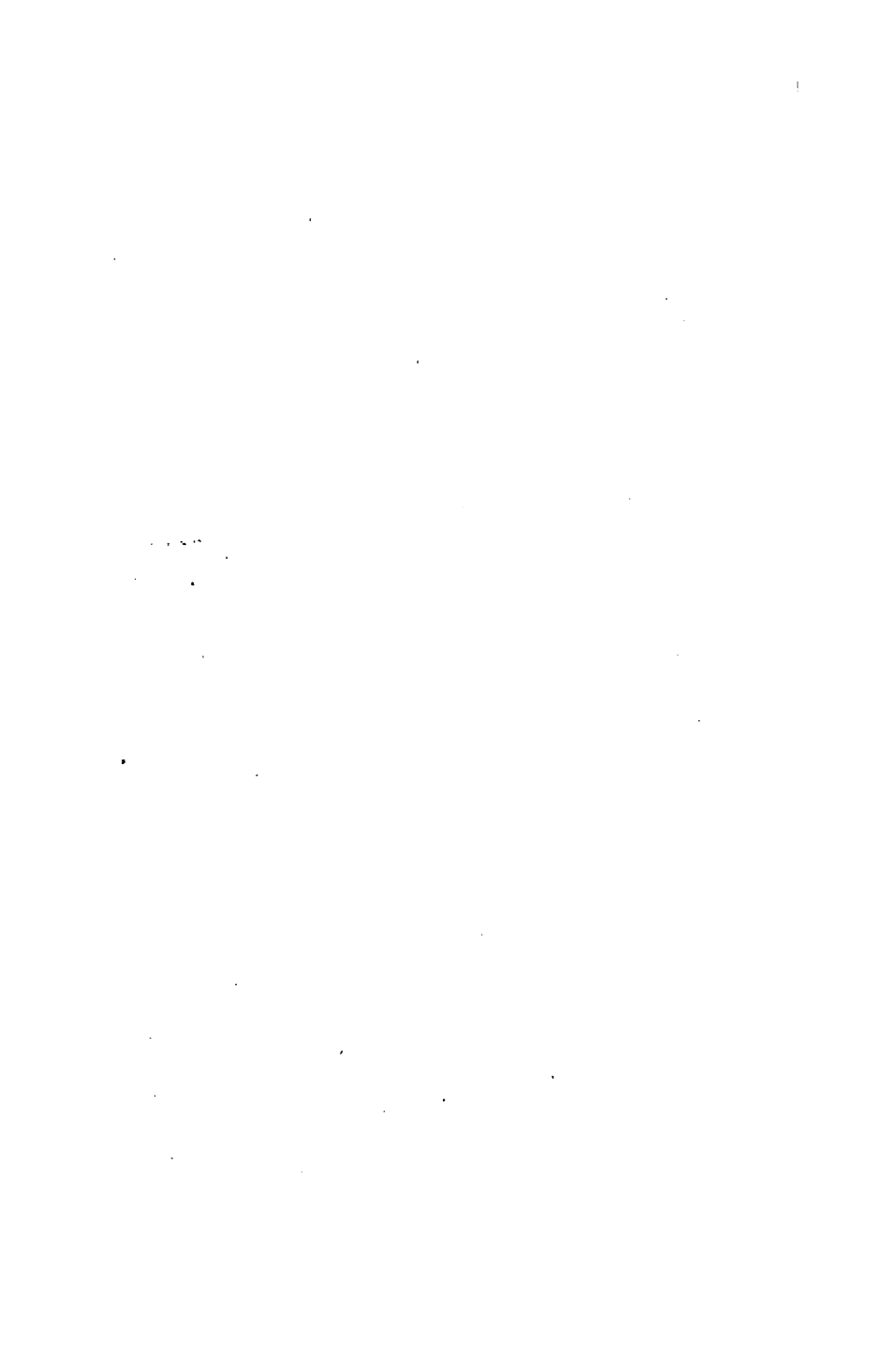
THIS TRANSLATION FROM SCHILLER

IS DEDICATED

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF GRATITUDE AND RESPECT
BY HIS FAITHFUL AND OB^{DT} SERVANT

THE TRANSLATOR.

Frankfort July 16th 1844.



PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.



Some years ago, when I read Watson's excellent Revolution of the Netherlands under Philip the 2nd, I felt a degree of interest, which political events but rarely excite. — On closer examination I thought I discovered that, the enthusiasm with which I was inspired had not so much been transfused into me from the book, but that it was rather a rapid effect of my own imaginative faculty, which had given to the received materials just that form, which so particularly charmed me. This effect I wished to render permanent, to multiply, to strengthen; these exalted sentiments I desired to extend, and to make others also participate in them. This was my first inducement to begin this history, and is all the vocation I have to write it. The execution of this design carried me farther than I at first imagined. A more in-

timate acquaintance with my subject made me perceive defects, which I had not previously observed, long waste tracts which I had to fill up, apparent contradictions which I had to remove, and isolated facts which it behoved me to connect with the rest of the subject. Not so much in order to fill my history with many new facts, as to seek a key for those which I already possessed, I betook myself to the sources themselves, and thus that, which was at first intended only as a general outline, extended itself into a detailed protracted history. The present first part, which concludes with the departure of the Dutchess of Parma from the Netherlands, is only to be looked upon as the introduction to the Revolution itself, which first came to an outbreak under the rule of her successor. I thought it requisite to devote so much the more care and exact attention to this preparative epoch, the more I missed these qualities in the generality of writers, who had treated of this period before me, and the more I convinced myself that on this all the subsequent events depend. If then this first volume should be found too poor in important occurrences, too prolix with reference to trifles, or what appear trifles, too profuse in reflections, and

generally too slow in the progress of the actions narrated, it must be remembered that from these beginnings the whole Revolution gradually proceeded, that all the succeeding great results arose out of the mass of infinite smaller ones.

A nation, such as was this, which we have here before us, always makes the first steps slowly, with hesitation and uncertainty; but the following ones so much the more rapidly. I have laid down for myself the same method of proceeding in the description of this rebellion. The longer the reader is delayed in this introduction; the more he familiarises himself with the actors, and dwells on the theatre of their achievements; with so much the more rapid and sure steps can I conduct him through the subsequent periods, where the accumulation of materials forbids me this slow pace, and this minuteness. One has no reason to complain of the paucity of authorities in this history, perhaps there is more cause to regret their superabundance, because one ought to have read them all in order to obtain that perspicuity, which, by the reading of a great part of them, suffers in some measure.

From such unequal, dependent, and often entirely contradictory narrations of the same

occurrences, it becomes particularly difficult to master the truth, which is partially concealed in all, but to be found entire and in its pure form in none. In this first volume, besides de Thou, Strada, Reyd, Grotius, Meteren, Burgundius, Meursius, Bentivoglio and some moderns, the Memoirs of Counsellor Hopperus, the life and correspondence of his friend Viglius, the trial papers of the Counts of Hoorne and Egmont, the defence of the Prince of Orange and some few others, have been my guides.

A minute compilation, put together with industry and critical acumen and composed with unusual fairness and truth, and which, indeed, certainly deserves a better name, has rendered me important services, in as much as, besides many documents which could not come into my hands, it has abstracted from the valuable works of Bos, Hooft, Bandt, le Clerc and others, some of which I had not ad hand, and of others of which I could not avail myself, as I am not master of the Dutch Language. I allude to the general history of the united Netherlands, which was published in Holland during the present century. An otherwise ordinary writer, Richard Dinoth, has become useful

to me from his extracts from several pamphlets of that time, which have themselves been long since lost. I have in vain endeavoured to procure the Correspondence of Cardinal Granvella, which also would, no doubt, have diffused much light over this epoch.

The lately published book of my excellent countryman, professor Spittler in Göttingen, on the Spanish Inquisition, came into my hands too late for me to avail myself of its sagacious and important contents. The more I am convinced of the importance of this history, the more I lament, that I had it not in my power to study its copious annals, in the manner I desired, from its first sources and from contemporaneous documents, and to reproduce it, independent of the form in which it was handed down to me by the thinking portion of my predecessors, and thereby emancipate myself from the power which every talented author exercises more or less over his reader. But then the work of a few years, would have become the labor of a life. My aim in this attempt is more than attained, if it convinces a portion of the reading public of the possibility, of a history's being written with historic truth, without therefore becoming a trial of patience to the reader,

and if it extorts from another portion the confession: that history can borrow from a cognate art, without thereby, of necessity, becoming a Romance.

Weimar, Michaelmass Fair 1788.



INTRODUCTION. *

One of the most remarkable political events which have made the 17th Century among the brightest of the world's epochs, appears to me to be the foundation of the freedom of the Netherlands. If the glittering exploits of ambition and pernicious lust of power claim our admiration, how much more should an event, in which oppressed humanity struggles for its noblest rights, where with the good cause unwonted powers are united, and the resources of resolute despair triumph in unequal contest over the terrible arts of Tyranny.

Great and encouraging is the thought, that a resource is at last discovered against the arrogant usurpations of kingly power; that its best calculated plans against the liberty of mankind may ignominiously fail; that courageous opposition can disable even the outstretched arm of a tyrant, and that heroic perseverance can at last exhaust its terrible resources. Never did this truth penetrate

* In this translation it has been my study to be literal and to preserve as far as possible not only the meaning of the Author, but his exact words and even the structure of the sentences, so that to the Student of German the book may be useful as being easy to retranspose into German. T.

me so sensibly as in the history of that memorable rebellion, which for ever separated the united Netherlands from the Spanish Crown — and therefore I thought it not unworthy the attempt, to lay before the world this fair memorial of civil strength, to awaken in the breast of my reader a pleasing consciousness of his own powers, and to give a new and irrefragable example, of what men dare venture in a good cause, and what they can execute through union. It is not that which is extraordinary or heroic in this event, which allures me to describe it. The annals of the world have preserved for us similar undertakings, which appear even bolder in the conception, and more brilliant in the execution. Some states have fallen with a more imposing convulsion, others have risen with more exalted flight. Nor ought one to expect here any prominent colossal personages, any of those astonishing exploits, which the history of past times presents to us in such rich abundance. Those ages are past, those characters exist no longer. In the soft lap of refinement we have suffered the powers to become relaxed, which in those ages found scope, were exercised, and rendered serviceable. With downcast admiration we gaze on those gigantic images as a debilitated old man does on the manly sports of youth.

Not so, however, in the history before us. The people whom we here see appear, were the most peaceful of this quarter of the globe, and less capable, than their neighbours, of that heroic spirit,

which imparts a higher character to the most insignificant actions. The pressure of circumstances surprised them with its peculiar power and forced a transitory greatness upon them, which they never should have possessed, and may perhaps never possess again. It is, indeed, exactly the want of heroic greatness which makes this event peculiar and instructive, and while others aim at shewing the superiority of genius over chance, I present here a picture where necessity created genius, and accident made heroes.

If it were in any wise permitted to imagine the interference of a higher Providence in human affairs, it would be allowable to do so in this history: so contradictory does it appear to reason and all experience.

Philip the 2^d, the most powerful sovereign of his time, whose dreaded superiority threatened to swallow up the whole of Europe, whose treasures surpassed the united riches of all Christian monarchs, whose fleets ruled in every sea; a monarch, whose dangerous schemes numerous armies obeyed, armies hardened by long and sanguinary wars and a Roman discipline, inspired with a confident national pride, and inflamed with the recollection of victories they had gained, thirsting for honour and spoil, and, like willing members moving in obedience to the daring genius of their leaders; this dreaded man, who was devoted to one obstinate project, an undertaking, the unceasing labour of a long reign, directed all these terrible resources to one single

object, which, in the evening of his days, he was compelled to give up unaccomplished — Philip the 2nd engaged in combat with a few weak nations, in a combat which he was unable to end!

And against what nations? Here a peaceful tribe of fishermen and shepherds, in a forgotten corner of Europe, which, too, with difficulty they redeemed from the Ocean; the sea their profession, their riches and their plague, a free poverty their highest blessing, their boast their virtue. There a good natured, moral, commercial people, revelling in the luxurious fruits of prosperous industry, watchful over laws which caused their welfare. In the happy leisure of affluence they forsake the narrow circle of immediate wants, and learn to thirst after higher gratifications. The new truth, whose gladdening morning now dawns over Europe, casts a fertilising beam on this favoured clime, and the free Burgher receives with joy the light, which oppressed and miserable slaves shut out. A frolic wantonness, which is wont to accompany abundance and freedom, lures this people on to examine the authority of antiquated opinions, and to break an ignominious chain. The severe rod of Despotism hangs over them, an arbitrary power threatens to tear away the foundation-pillars of their happiness, the guardian of their laws becomes their tyrant. Simple in their political wisdom as in their manners, they dare to exhibit an ancient treaty and to remind the Lord of both Indies of the rights of nature. A name decides the whole issue of things. They called that

rebellion in Madrid, which in Brussels was styled only a legitimate proceeding. The complaints of Brabant required a politic mediator. Philip the 2^d sent it an executioner, and the signal for War was given. A tyranny without parallel assailed property and life. The despairing citizens, to whom the choice of two kinds of death was left, selected the nobler one on the battle field. A thriving and luxurious people loves peace, but becomes warlike, if it becomes poor. Now it ceases to tremble for a life which is to be deprived of every thing, whereby it could be rendered desirable. The rage of rebellion seized on the most distant provinces; trade and commerce lay prostrate, the ships disappeared from the harbours, the artizan from his workshop, the rustic from the devastated fields. Thousands fled to distant lands; a thousand victims fell on the scaffold, and new thousands pressed on; for divine, indeed, must that doctrine be for which men can die so joyfully. There only wanted the last achieving hand, the enlightened enterprising spirit, which seized on this great political crisis, and matured the offspring of chance to the designs of wisdom.

William the Silent devoted himself, a second Brutus, to the great cause of liberty. Raised above a timorous selfishness, he gave in to the throne his resignation of offices which devolved on him culpable duties, magnanimously divested himself of his princely existence, descended to a voluntary poverty, and became no more than a citizen of the world. The cause of justice was staked upon the

hazardous game of battle; but a band of hirelings and peaceful husbandmen could not withstand the terrible onset of an experienced force. Twice he led his dispirited armies against the tyrant, twice they deserted him; but not so his courage.

Philip the 2nd sent as many reinforcements, as the dreadful rapacity of his viceroy made beggars. Fugitives, cast forth by their country, sought another on the sea and turned to satisfy their revenge and hunger on the ships of their enemy. Naval heroes were now formed from corsairs, a marine was drawn together out of piratical vessels, and a Republic arose out of morasses. Seven provinces tore off their bonds at the same time; a new, youthful state powerful through its concord, its waters and despair. A solemn decree of the nation deposed the tyrant from his throne; the Spanish name disappeared from all the laws.

That had now been done, for which there was no longer any forgiveness; the Republic became desperate, because she could no more retrace her steps; factions tore asunder her union; her terrible element, the sea itself, leagued with her oppressors, threatened a premature grave to her tender commencement, she felt herself succumb to the superior force of the enemy and cast herself a suppliant before the most powerful thrones of Europe, to give away a dominion which she could no longer protect. At last, and with difficulty — so despised at first was this state, that even the rapacity of foreign monarchs spurned her young

bloom — at last she forced on a foreigner her dangerous crown. New hopes revived her sinking courage, but destiny gave her a traitor in this new father of his country, and in the most desperate crisis, when the implacable foe already stormed before the gates, Charles of Anjou invaded those liberties, which he had been called to protect.— An assassin's hand even tore the steersman from the rudder, the destiny of the infant Republic seemed accomplished and all her guardian angels fled with William of Orange — but the ship continued to scud along in the storm and the bellying canvass required the pilot's help no more.

Philip the 2nd saw the fruit of a deed lost, which cost him his royal honour, and who knows, too, but the secret respect of his silent conscience. In obstinate and dubious contest, liberty struggled with despotism; sanguinary battles were fought; a brilliant array of heroes succeeded each other on the field of glory; Flanders and Brabant were the school which educated generals for the coming century. A long, devastating war destroyed the blessings of the open country, victor and vanquished bled to death, while the young republic of the waters drew to itself fugitive industry, and, from the wreck of its neighbour, erected the noble edifice of its own greatness. Forty years continued a war, whose fortunate conclusion was not to bless the dying eye of Philip; which destroyed a Paradise in Europe and created a new one from its ruins — which swallowed up the bloom of warlike

youth, enriched a whole quarter of the globe and reduced to poverty the possessor of the golden Peru.— This monarch who, without oppressing his country, could expend nine hundred tons of gold, who by tyrannical means extorted far more, heaped on his depopulated country a debt of 140 millions of ducats. An implacable hatred of liberty swallowed up all these treasures and consumed in fruitless labour his royal life. But the Reformation thrived under the devastation of his sword and the new Republic reared her victorious banner from amid the blood of her citizens.

This unnatural turn of affairs seems to border on a miracle; but much combined to break the power of Philip, and favour the progress of the infant state. Had the whole weight of his power fallen on the united provinces, there had been no escape for their religion, their liberty. His own ambition came to the assistance of their weakness, since it compelled him to divide his strength. The expensive policy of having traitors in his pay in every cabinet of Europe; the support of the league in France; the revolt of the Moors in Grenada; the conquest of Portugal and the magnificent fabric of the Escorial exhausted at last his apparently inexhaustible treasures and forbade him to act in the field with activity and energy. The German and Italian troops, who were allured to his banner, only by the hope of spoil, mutinied when he could no longer pay them, and faithlessly abandoned their leaders in the decisive moment of their

efficacy. These terrible instruments of oppression now directed their dangerous power against the king himself, and raged as enemies in the provinces which had remained faithful to him. The unfortunate armament against Britain, on which, like a frantic gamester, he had staked the whole strength of his dominions, completed his ruin; with the Armada sank the tribute of both Indies and the flower of Spanish chivalry. But in the very same proportion, that the Spanish power declined, the republic acquired fresh life. The gaps which the new religion, the tyranny of the inquisition, the furious rapacity of the soldiery and the devastations of a long war, without interval of peace, made in the provinces of Brabant, Flanders and Hainault, which were the arsenals and treasuries of this expensive war, made it, naturally, with every year, more difficult to support and recruit the royal armies. The Catholic Netherlands had already lost a million of citizens, and the trodden down fields maintained their ploughmen no longer. Spain itself could spare but few more men. That country, surprised by a rapid affluence which introduced idleness, had lost much of its population and could not long support these emigrations to the new world and the Netherlands. Few among these emigrants, saw their country again; these few had left it as youths, and now returned to it infirm old men. Gold, which had become more common, made soldiers increasingly dearer; the spreading disposition to effeminacy enhanced the price of the op-

posite virtues. Quite different was the posture of affairs with the rebels. All the thousands, whom the cruelty of the royal governor drove from the southern Netherlands, and the war of the Hugonots out of France, and those whom the constraint of conscience expelled from the other parts of Europe all these belonged to them. Their recruiting ground was the whole Christian world. For them worked the fanaticism of the persecutor and the persecuted. The fresh enthusiasm of a newly promulgated doctrine, revenge, hunger and hopeless misery drew to their standard adventurers from every district of Europe. All who were gained for the new doctrine, all who had suffered from despotism or had still cause of fear therefrom for the future, made the destiny of this new Republic their own. Every injury, endured from a tyrant, gave a right to citizenship in Holland. Men pressed towards a country, where liberty raised her encouraging pennon, where respect, security and revenge on her oppressors were ensured to fugitive religion. If we consider the conflux of all people to Holland, in the present day, who on their entrance upon her territory receive back their rights as men, what must it have then been, when all the rest of Europe still sighed under an afflicting bondage, when Amsterdam was nearly the sole freeport for all opinions? Many hundred families preserved their riches in a land, which the Ocean and concord protected with equal power. The republican army was complete, without its being ne-

cessary to forsake the plough. Amid the clash of arms bloomed trade and activity, and the peaceful citizen enjoyed in anticipation all the fruits of liberty which were to be acquired by foreign blood. At the very time when the Republic of Holland struggled for her very existence, she extended the limits of her territories to beyond the Ocean and was silently engaged in erecting her East Indian throne. Moreover, Spain conducted this expensive war with dead, unfructifying gold, that never returned into the hand which gave it away, but which raised the price of all necessaries. Industry and commerce were the treasuries of the republic. Time lessened the one whilst it multiplied the other. In the very same proportion that the resources of government became exhausted during the long continuance of the war, the Republic first began, properly speaking, to reap its harvest. It possessed a well husbanded and productive seedcorn, which returned fruit late, but a hundredfold; but the tree from which Philip gathered fruit, was a hewn down trunk, and became verdant no more: Philip's adverse destiny decreed, that all the treasures, which he lavished for the destruction of the provinces, aided in enriching them. Those unceasing outpourings of Spanish gold had diffused riches and luxury throughout Europe, but the increasing wants of Europe were chiefly supplied by the hands of the Netherlanders, who were masters of the commerce of the whole then known world and fixed the price of all merchandise. Even du-

ring the war Philip could not prevent the commerce of the republic with his own subjects, nay he could not even desire it. He himself paid the rebels the expenses of their defence; for the very war, which was to ruin them, increased the sale of their goods. The enormous expenditure for his fleets and armies flowed, for the most part, into the treasury of the republic, which was in alliance with the commercial places of Flanders and Brabant. What Philip set in motion against the rebels, operated directly in their favour. All the enormous sums, which a war of 40 years swallowed up, were poured into the vessels of the Danaides, and ran through into a bottomless abyss. The sluggish progress of this war did the King of Spain as much injury, as it brought advantage to the rebels. His army was for the most part composed of the remains of those victorious troops, which had already, under Charles the 5th, gathered their laurels. Long and ancient services entitled them to repose; many among them, whom the war had enriched, impatiently wished themselves back at their homes, to end in ease a life of hardship. Their former zeal, their heroic spirit and their discipline relaxed in the same proportion, as they thought they had redeemed their honour and duty, and as they began to reap at last the reward of so many engagements. Add to this, that troops, which had been accustomed, through the impetuosity of their attack, to vanquish all opposition, were necessarily wearied out by a war, which

was carried on, less against men than the elements, which exercised the patience more than it gratified the love of glory, where there was less of danger to contend with, than difficulty and want. Neither their personal courage, nor their long, warlike experience could avail them in a country, whose peculiar characteristics gave the most dastardly of its natives an advantage over them. In fine, one discomfiture on foreign ground did them more injury than many victories over an enemy, who was here at home, could profit them. With the rebels the case was exactly reversed. In so protracted a war, in which no decisive battle took place, the weaker party must at last learn from the stronger, small defeats accustomed him to danger, small victories animated his confidence. At the opening of the civil war, the republican army had scarce dared to shew itself in the field before the Spanish; its long continuance practised and hardened it. As the royal armies grew wearied with victory, the confidence of the rebels rose with their improved discipline and experience. At last, at the end of half a century, master and pupil separated, unsubdued, as equal combatants.

Again, through the whole course of this war the party of the rebels acted with more concord and unanimity than the royal party. Before the former had lost their first master, the government of the Netherlands had passed through not less than five distinct hands. The irresolution of the Dutchess of Parma soon imparted itself to the

cabinet of Madrid, and in a short time ran through nearly all the various systems of state policy. Duke Alba's inflexible sternness, the mildness of his successor Requesens, Don John of Austria's cunning and insidiousness and the active and imperious mind of the Prince of Parma gave to this war just as many opposite directions, while the scheme of the rebellion remained ever consistent in a single head, in which it abode clear and vigorous. — The greatest evil was, that the principles of action generally missed the right moment, in which they might have been applied. In the commencement of the troubles, when the preponderance was evidently still on the side of the king, when a quick resolution and manly consistency could have crushed the rebellion in the cradle, the reins of government were allowed to hang loose in the hands of a woman. After the revolt had come to an open outbreak, and the strength of faction and of the king stood more equally balanced and when a skilful flexibility alone could have prevented the impending civil war, the government devolved on a man, who wanted exactly that one qualification for this office. So watchful an observer as William the Silent let no advantage escape him, which the faulty policy of his adversary gave him, and with silent industry he slowly advanced his great undertaking to its accomplishment.

But why did not Philip the 2nd himself appear in the Netherlands? why did he prefer to exhaust

the most supernatural efforts rather than make trial of the only expedient, which could not fail? — To break the overgrown power of the nobility, there was no remedy more natural than the presence of their master. Near royalty all private greatness must necessarily have sunk, all other display have disappeared. Instead of the truth flowing through so many impure channels, slowly and darkly, to the distant throne, so that the procrastination of defensive measures gave time to the work of accident to ripen into one of rational deliberation, his own penetrating glance would have separated truth from error; not his humanity, cold policy alone would have preserved to the land a million of citizens. The nearer to their source, the more forcible would his edicts have been; the nearer to their object, the more they would have deprived the blows of the rebellion of their force and spirit. It costs infinitely more to do to an enemy in his presence the evil, which might have been easily attempted against him in his absence. The rebellion at first appeared to tremble at its own name and for a long time took shelter under the ingenious pretext of defending the cause of its sovereign against the arbitrary assumptions of his governor. Philip's appearance in Brussels would have at once ended this juggling. Then the rebels would have been compelled to act up to their pretensions, or cast away the mask and condemn themselves by appearing in their true form. And what an alleviation it would have been to the Ne-

therlands if the king's presence had spared them only those evils, which were heaped upon them without his knowledge and contrary to his will. What gain to himself, even if it had served no other purpose than to watch over the administration of the vast sums, which, improperly raised for the exigencies of the war, were lost in the plundering hands of his vicegerent.

What his deputies were compelled to extort by the unnatural expedient of terror, Majesty would have found the nation disposed to grant of its own accord. That which made his deputies objects of detestation, would, in the monarch, have created fear; for the abuse of hereditary power presses less painfully than the abuse of that which is delegated. His presence would have preserved thousands, if he had been nothing more than an economical despot; if even he had been not so much as that, still the awe of his person would have preserved to him a territory, which was lost through hatred and contempt for his tools.

Exactly as the oppression of the people of the Netherlands was the affair of all men who felt their rights, in like manner, one would think, the disobedience and defection of that people would have been a call to all princes in the prerogatives of their neighbour to protect their own. But jealousy of the Spanish power this time got the better of this political sympathy, and the first powers of Europe stepped forth, more or less openly, on the side of freedom.

The Emperor Maximilian the 2nd, although bound to the house of Spain by the ties of relationship, gave it just occasion to charge him with secretly favouring the party of the rebels. Through the offer of his mediation he silently accorded to their complaints a degree of justice, which could not but encourage them to persevere therein the more resolutely. Under an Emperor, sincerely devoted to the house of Spain, William of Orange would scarcely have drawn so many troops and so much money from Germany. France, without openly and formally breaking the peace, placed a prince of the blood at the head of the Netherlandish rebels and the operations of the latter were chiefly conducted with French gold and troops. Elizabeth of England did but exercise a just revenge and retaliation, when she protected the rebels against their legitimate sovereign, and although her sparing aid at farthest did but extend to warding off utter ruin from the republic, still even this was of infinite consequence at a moment of time, when hope alone could have supported their exhausted courage. With both these powers Philip at that time stood united by peace, and both betrayed him. Honesty between the weak and strong is often no virtue; those delicate ties which hold equals together, are seldom beneficial to him, of whom we stand in awe.

Philip himself had banished truth from political intercourse, he himself had dissolved morality between kings and had made artifice the divinity of

cabinets. Without ever enjoying his superiority, he was compelled, throughout his whole life, to contend with the jealousy which it roused in others. Europe made him atone for the abuse of a power of which he had never the full use.

If against the disparity between the two combatants which, at first sight, is so astonishing, we weigh all the incidental circumstances which opposed Spain and befriended the Netherlands, that which is supernatural in this event will disappear, but that which is extraordinary remains — and a just standard is found, to enable us to estimate the proper merit of these republicans in working out their freedom. But let it not be thought that as accurate a calculation of power could have preceded the undertaking itself, or that, on entering this unknown sea, they could have already known the shore on which they afterwards landed. The work did not present itself to the mind of its originator in the mature form which it assumed when completed, any more than the mind of Luther discerned the eternal separation of creeds, when he opposed the sale of indulgences. What a difference between the modest procession of those beggars in Brussels, who prayed for a more humane treatment as a favour, and the dreaded majesty of a free state, which treated with kings as equals, and in less than a century gave away the throne of its former tyrant. The unseen hand of fate guided the discharged arrow into a higher arch, and in quite a different direction

from that in which it was impelled by the bowstring.

In the lap of happy Brabant, liberty had its birth which, while yet a new-born infant, torn from its mother, was to gladden despised Holland. But the undertaking must not appear to us less, because it turned out otherwise than it had been intended. Man works up, smoothes and fashions the rough stone which the times bring to him; to him belongs the moment and the spot, but accident develops the history of the world. If the passions which exhibited themselves active in this event, were only not unworthy of the work to which they were unwillingly subservient—if the powers which aided in its accomplishment and the single actions, from the concatenation of which it wonderfully arose, were but intrinsically noble powers, beautiful and great actions, then is the event grand, interesting and fruitful for us, and we are at liberty to wonder at the bold offspring of chance or offer up our admiration to a higher intelligence.

The history of the world is consistent with itself like the laws of nature, and simple as the soul of man. Like conditions bring back like phenomena. On the same soil where now the Netherlanders resisted their Spanish tyrants, their forefathers, the Batavi and Belgae, fifteen centuries before, combated with their Roman oppressors. Like the former, reluctantly subject to a haughty master, and, like them, misgoverned by rapacious satraps, with like resolution they cast off their chain,

and tried their fortune in a similar, unequal combat. The same victors's pride, the same elevation of the nation is to be found in the Spaniard of the 16th century as in the Roman of the first, the same valour and discipline in the armies of both, the same terror before their battle array. There as here, we see artifice combat with superior force, and firmness, supported by unanimity, weary out a prodigious power which had debilitated itself by division; there as here, private hatred arms the nation; a single man, born for his times, discovers to them the dangerous secret of their power and brings their mute grief to a bloody disclosure. »Confess, Batavians«, cries Claudius Civilis to his fellow citizens in the sacred grove, »are we treated, as formerly, by these Romans, as allies and friends, or not rather as menials? We are delivered up to their functionaries and governors who, when satiated with our plunder and with our blood, are relieved by others, who renew the same outrages under different names. If even it, at last, happens that Rome sends us one who should inquire into our wrongs, he oppresses us with an ostentatious and costly retinue and with still more intolerable pride. The levies are again at hand which tear for ever children from their parents, brothers from brothers, and deliver up your vigorous youth to Roman lawlessness. Now, Batavians, is our time. Never did Rome lie so prostrate as now. Let not their names of legions terrify you, their camps contain nought but old men and plunder. We have

infantry and horsemen; Germany is ours, and Gaul desirous to throw off its yoke. Let Syria serve them, and Asia and the East, where Kings are needed. There are still those among us who were born before tribute was paid to the Romans. The Gods are with the bravest." Solemn sacraments hallow this conspiracy, like the league of the Guises; like that, it craftily wraps itself in the veil of submissiveness, in the majesty of a great name. The cohorts of Civilis swear allegiance on the Rhine to Vespasian in Syria, as the Covenant did to Philip the 2^d. The same arena produces the same plan of defence, the same refuge of despair. Both confided their wavering fortunes to a friendly element; in the same distress, Civilis preserves his island as, fifteen centuries after him, William of Orange did the town of Leyden—through an artificial inundation. The valour of the Batavi disclosed the impotency of the World's ruler, as the noble courage of their descendants exposed the decay of the Spanish power to the whole of Europe. The same fecundity of genius in the generals of both times, made the war continue with similar obstinacy and end nearly as dubiously; but there is, nevertheless, one difference apparent; the Romans and Batavians fought humanely; for they did not fight for religion.





FIRST BOOK.



EARLIER HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS

UP TO THE 16th CENTURY.

Before we consider the details of this great Revolution, we must take some steps back into the ancient history of the country, and see how the constitution originated, of which we find it possessed at the time of this remarkable change.

The first appearance of this people in the history of the world, is the moment of their fall; from their conquerors they received a political existence. The extensive region, which is bounded by Germany towards the East, on the South by France, on the North and Northwest by the North-Sea, and which we comprehend under the general name of the Netherlands, was at the time when the Romans invaded Gaul, divided amongst three principal nations, all originally of German descent, German manners, and German spirit. The Rhine formed its boundaries. On the left of the stream dwelt the Belgae, on its right the Frieses, and the Batavi on the island which was formed by its two arms and the ocean. All these separate nations were earlier or later subjected to the Romans, but their conquerors themselves give us the most glorious testi-

mony to their valour. The Belgae, writes Ceasar, were the only people amongst the Gauls, who repulsed the invading Teutones and Cimbri from their limits. The Batavi, Tacitus tells us, surpassed all the people on the Rhine in valour. This savage people paid their tribute in soldiers and were saved by their conquerors, like arrow and sword, only for battle. The Romans themselves acknowledged the horse of the Batavi to be the best troops in their armies. For a long time they formed, as at this day the Swiss, the body guards of the Roman Emperor; their wild courage terrified the Dacians, when they saw them swim in full armour across the Danube. The same Batavi had accompanied Agricola in his expedition against Britain, and helped him conquer that island. The Frieses were, of all, the last subdued and the first to regain their liberty. The morasses among which they dwelt, attracted the conquerors later, and cost them more. The Roman Drusus, who made war in these regions, conducted a canal from the Rhine into the Flevo, the present Zuyderzee, through which the Roman fleet penetrated into the Northsea, and thence, through the mouths of the Ems and the Weser, found an easy passage into the interior of Germany. During four centuries we find Batavi in the Roman armies, but after the time of Honorius their name disappears from history. We see their island overrun by the Franks, who again lost themselves in the adjoining country of Belgium. The Frieses threw off the yoke of their distant and

powerless rulers, and again appear as a free, and even a conquering people, who governed themselves by their own customs and a remnant of Roman laws, and extended their limits beyond the left bank of the Rhine. Friesland, especially, had, of all the provinces of the Netherlands, suffered the least from the irruptions of foreign nations, from foreign customs, and laws, and through a long succession of centuries it retained traces of its constitution, of its national spirit and its manners, which have not, even at the present day, entirely disappeared.

The Epoch of the emigration of nations annihilated the original form of most of these tribes; other races arose with other constitutions. The towns and encampments of the Romans disappeared in the general devastation, and with them the memorials of their great skill in government, the works which they had employed the natives in executing. The neglected dikes once more yielded to the violence of the streams and to the encroaching Ocean. Those wonders of human labor, the canals, formed with so much art, dried up, the rivers changed their direction, the continent and the sea confused their limits, and the nature of the soil changed with its inhabitants. The connection of the two eras seems effaced, and with a new race of men commences a new history. The monarchy of the Franks, which arose out of the ruins of Roman Gaul, had, in the 6th and 7th centuries, swallowed up all the provinces of the Ne-

therlands and had planted the Christian faith in those countries. Charles Martel subdued to the French crown Friesland the last of all the provinces, after an obstinate war, and by his arms paved a way for the Gospel. Charlemagne united all these countries, which now formed one division of the extensive empire which that conqueror created out of Germany, France and Lombardy. As this vast empire was again torn into fragments under his descendants, so the Netherlands, also, fell at times into German, then into French, then into Lotheringian Provinces, and at last we find them under both the names of Friesland and Lower Lotheringia.

With the Franks came also the offspring of the North, the feudal system, into these lands, and here, too, it degenerated, as in all other countries. The more powerful vassals separated gradually from the crown, and the royal governors usurped the countries they were appointed to govern. But these rebellious vassals could maintain themselves against the crown, only by the aid of their inferiors, and they were compelled to purchase the assistance which these latter afforded, by new grants. The church became powerful through pious usurpations and donations, and acquired an individual independent existence in its Abbeys and episcopal seats. Thus were the Netherlands, in the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, split up into several small sovereignties, whose possessors did homage, at one time to the German Emperor, at another to the Kings of France. By purchase, marriages, legacies,

and also through conquest, several of these provinces were often united under one principal head, and in the fifteenth century we see the house of Burgundy in possession of the chief part of the Netherlands. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy had, with more or less right, already reduced 11 provinces under his dominion, which Charles the Bold, his son, by the force of arms, increased with two others. Thus arose imperceptibly a new state in Europe, which wanted nothing but the name, to be the most flourishing Kingdom in this quarter of the Globe. These extensive possessions made the Dukes of Burgundy formidable neighbours to France, and tempted the restless spirit of Charles the Bold to devise the scheme of a conquest which was to comprehend the whole unbroken, region, contained between the Zuyderzee and the mouth of the Rhine, as far as Alsace. The inexhaustible resources of this prince justify in some measure this bold chimera. A formidable army threatened to carry it into execution. Already Switzerland trembled for her liberty; but deceitful fortune abandoned him in three terrible battles, and the giddy conqueror was lost among the living and the dead.*)

*) A page, who had seen him fall and, a few days after the battle, conducted the victors to the spot, saved him from an ignominious oblivion. His body was dragged out of a pool in which it was fast frozen, naked and altogether disfigured with wounds; and it was but with great trouble he was recognised, by some of his teeth being deficient and by

The sole heiress of Charles the Bold, Maria, the richest princess and unhappy Helena of that time, who brought misery on those lands, now engaged the expectation of the whole then known world. Two great princes, King Louis 11th of France, for the young Dauphin, his son, and Maximilian of Austria, son of the Emperor Frederic the 3^d, appeared among her suitors. He, to whom she should give her hand, would become the most powerful prince in Europe, and here, for the first time, this quarter of the globe began to fear for its balance of power. Louis, the more powerful of the two, could support his demand by force of arms; but the people of the Netherlands, who gave away the hand of their princess, passed by this dreaded neighbour and decided for Maximilian, whose more remote territories and more circumscribed power threatened the liberty of their country less. A deceitful, unfortunate policy which through a strange dispensation of heaven, only accelerated the melancholy fate which it was intended to prevent.

the nails of his fingers, which he used to let grow longer, than other men. But that, notwithstanding these marks, there were still incredulous people who doubted his death and looked for his reappearance, is proved by a passage in a missive, in which Lewis the Eleventh called upon the Burgundian States to return to the Crown of France. "If, the passage runs, "Duke Charles should still be living, you shall be released from your oath to me." Comines T. III. Preuves des Mémoires 495. 497.

To Philip the Fair, the son of Maria and Maximilian, his Spanish bride brought that extensive Kingdom which Ferdinand and Isabella had recently founded; and Charles of Austria, his son, was born lord of the Kingdoms of Spain, of the two Sicilies, of the new world and of the Netherlands. The common people rose here earlier than in other countries, where the feudal system prevailed, from their bondage and soon obtained an independent civil existence. The favourable situation of the country on the Northsea and on great navigable rivers roused commerce early, which brought men together into towns, encouraged industry in arts, allured foreigners and extended prosperity and affluence among them. With however much contempt the warlike policy of those times looked down upon every useful business still the rulers of the country could not entirely mistake the essential advantages they derived therefrom. The increasing population of their territories, the different imposts, which they extorted from natives and foreigners under the various titles of tolls, customs, highway rates, escort-money, bridge-tolls, market fees, escheats and so forth, were too great temptations for them to remain indifferent to the sources to which they were indebted for the same. Their own rapacity made them promoters of trade, and barbarism itself, as often happens, served as a substitute, until, at last, a healthy state policy assumed its place. — Subsequently they themselves invited the Lombard merchants, and accorded to

the towns some valuable privileges and independent jurisdiction, by which these acquired respectability and influence to an uncommon degree. The numerous wars which the Counts and Dukes carried on amongst one another with their neighbours, made them dependant on the good will of the towns, who obtained weight through their riches and understood how to extort important grants in return for the subsidies which they afforded. In progress of time these privileges of the commonalties increased, as the crusades made an expensive equipment necessary to the nobles and as a new road was opened for the productions of the East to Europe, and the spreading luxury created new wants to their princes. Thus we find already in the 11th and 12th centuries a mixed form of government in these lands, in which the power of the sovereign is considerably circumscribed by the influence of the States, that is to say by the nobility, the clergy and the towns. These, under the Name of States, assembled as often as the wants of the province required it. Without their consent no new laws were valid, no war could be carried on and no taxes levied, no change made in the coinage and no foreigner admitted to any part of the government. All the provinces had these privileges in common with one another; others varied according to the various districts. The government was hereditary, but the son did not enter on the right of his father until he had solemnly sworn to preserve the constitution.

The first law giver is necessity: all the wants which were met by this constitution were originally commercial wants. Thus the whole constitution was founded on commerce, and the laws of the nation were adapted to their profession. The last article in this constitution, which excluded foreigners from all employments, was a natural consequence of all the preceding. Such a complicated and artificial relation of the sovereign to his people, which was often modified to the peculiar wants of each province, and frequently of some single city, required the liveliest zeal for the preservation of the liberties of the country, combined with the most intimate acquaintance with the same. Neither could well be expected from a foreigner. This law obtained with respect to each province in particular, so that in Brabant no Fleming, no Hollander could be appointed in Zealand, and it continued even after all these provinces were united under one government.

Brabant possessed, above all the rest, the highest degree of freedom. Its privileges were esteemed so valuable, that many mothers from the adjacent provinces removed thither about the time of their lying in, in order to give birth to their children there and make them participate in all the immunities of that happy country; just as, says Strada, one improves the plants of a rude climate in the soil of a milder. After the house of Burgundy had united several provinces under its dominions, the separate provincial assemblies which, up to that

time, had been independent tribunals, were referred to a general house of judicature at Malines, which united the various members into one body and decided as a last appeal all civil and criminal actions. The independence of the separate provinces was abolished and the supreme power now rested in the senate at Malines. After the death of Charles the Bold the States did not neglect to avail themselves of the embarrassment of their Dutchess, who was consequently in their power. The States of Holland and Zealand compelled her to sign a great charter, which secured to them the most important sovereign rights. The overweening spirit of the people of Ghent went to such a length, that they arbitrarily dragged those favourites of Maria, who had had the misfortune to displease them, before their tribunals and beheaded them before the eyes of that princess. During the short Government of the Dutches Maria until her marriage, the commons obtained a power which made them very nearly a free state. After the decease of his spouse, Maximilian arbitrarily assumed the government as guardian of his son. The states, offended by this invasion of their rights, did not acknowledge his rule and could be brought no further than tolerating him as governor for a fixed time and under conditions ratified by oath.

Maximilian believed that he might venture to overstep the constitution after he became Roman Emperor. He imposed extraordinary taxes on the provinces, gave appointments to Burgundians and

Germans, and introduced foreign troops into the provinces. But with the power of their Regent grew also the jealousy of these republicans. The people took up arms as he held his entry into Bruges with a powerful retinue of foreigners, made themselves masters of his person, and placed him in confinement in the castle. In spite of the powerful intercession of the imperial and Roman courts he did not again obtain his freedom, until security had been given to the people regarding the points in dispute.

The security of life and property, which arose from mild laws and an equal administration of justice had encouraged activity and industry in these countries. In continual contest with the ocean and the mouths of rapid rivers, which poured their violence on the subjacent land, and whose force it was requisite to break by embankments and canals, this people had early learnt, by remarking the natural objects around them, through their industry and perseverance to defy an element of superior power, and, like the Egyptian, whom his Nile instructed, to exercise their spirit of invention and acuteness in the ingenuity of their defence. The natural fertility of their soil, which favoured agriculture and the breeding of cattle, at the same time tended to increase the population. Their happy position on the sea and the great navigable rivers of Germany and France, some of which fall into the sea here, the numerous artificial canals which intersect the land in all direc-

tions gave life to navigation, and the interior communication of the provinces, which was thereby rendered so easy, soon roused a commercial spirit among these people. The neighbouring British and Danish coasts were the first visited by their vessels. The English wool which these brought back, employed thousands of industrious hands in Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp, and so early as the middle of the 12th century, cloths from Flanders were worn in France and Germany. As early as the 11th century, we find ships of Friesland in the Belt and even in the sea of the Levant. This courageous people ventured even, without a compass, to steer under the North pole right through to the northern point of Russia. From the Vandal towns the Netherlands received a part of the trade of the Levant, which at that time still passed from the Black-Sea, through the Russian territories to the Baltic. When, in the 13th century, this trade began to decline, when the Crusades opened a new road for Indian merchandise through the Mediterranean, and the Italian towns usurped this lucrative branch of commerce, and the great Hanseatic union was formed in Germany, the Netherlands became the most important emporium between the North and South. As yet, the use of the compass was not general and they sailed slowly and laboriously along the shore. The Baltic seaports were, during the winter months, for the most part, frozen up and inaccessible to all kinds of vessels. Ships, therefore, which, in a year's time, could not well

accomplish the long voyage from the Mediterranean to the Belt, gladly chose a place of rendez-vous which was situated half way between the two. With an immense continent behind them, with which they carried on intercourse through navigable streams, open to the Ocean towards the west and north through commodious harbours, this country appeared to be expressly formed for a place of assemblage of different nations and for a centre of commerce. In the principal towns of the Netherlands, marts were established. Portuguese, Spaniards, Italians, French, Britons, Germans, Danes and Swedes congregated here with the products of every country in the world. The competition of sellers brought down the price of goods; industry was stimulated; for the market was at the door. With the necessary exchange of money arose the commerce in bills (banking business), which opened a new and productive source of wealth. The princes of the country, who had at last become acquainted with their true interest, encouraged the merchant by the most important immunities, and knew how to protect their commerce by advantageous treaties with foreign powers. When in the 15th century, several separate provinces were united under one ruler, they discontinued also their injurious private wars, and their separate interests were now more intimately united by a common government. Their commerce and affluence prospered in the lap of a long peace which the superior power

of their princes imposed on the neighbouring monarchs. The Burgundian flag was feared in every sea, the dignity of their sovereign gave support to their undertakings, and made the enterprises of a private individual the affair of a formidable state. Such powerful protection soon placed them in a position even to renounce the Hanseatic league, and to pursue this daring enemy through every sea. The Hanseatic merchant-men, to whom the Spanish coasts were closed, were compelled at last, against their will, to visit the Flemish fairs and obtain the Spanish goods at Netherlandish markets.

Bruges in Flanders was, in the 14th and 15th centuries, the central point of the whole European commerce and the great market of all nations. In the year 1468 a hundred and fifty merchant vessels were computed to have entered the barbour of Sluys at one time. Beside the rich factory of the Hanseatic league, there were here 15 trading companies with their offices, many factories and families of merchants from all European countries. Here was established the market of all northern products for the south, and of all southern and Levantine products for the north. These passed in Hanseatic vessels through the Sound and up the Rhine to upper Germany, or were transported by land carriage across to Brunswick and Luneburgh.

As in the common course of human affairs a licentious luxuriousness followed this prosperity. The seductive example of Philip the Good could not

but accelerate this period. The court of the Burgundian Dukes was the most voluptuous and most superb in Europe, even Italy not excepted. The costly apparel of the higher classes, which afterwards served as patterns to the Spaniards, and, eventually, passed over with the Burgundian customs to the court of Austria, soon descended to the lower orders, and the meanest citizen nursed his person in velvet and silk. *)

Comines, an author who travelled through the Netherlands about the middle of the 15th century, tells us that pride had succeeded this abundance. The pomp and vanity of dress was carried by both sexes to an extravagant extent. The luxury of

*) Philip the Good was too profuse in his expenses to amass treasures; nevertheless, Charles the Bold found among his effects a vaster store of table services, jewels, carpets and linen accumulated, than three rich principedoms of that time possessed together, and, over and above these, a treasure of three hundred thousand dollars in ready money. The riches of this prince of the Burgundian people lay exposed on the battle fields of Granson, Murten and Nancy. Here a Swiss Soldier drew from the finger of Charles the Bold that celebrated diamond, which was long thought the largest in Europe, which, even now, sparkles as the second in the crown of France, and which the unwitting finder sold for a florin. The Swiss exchanged the silver they found, for tin, and the gold for copper, and tore the costly tents of cloth of gold into pieces. The value of the spoil which was taken in silver, gold and jewels, has been estimated at three Millions. Charles and his army had advanced to the combat, not like foes who purpose battle, but like conquerors who adorn themselves after victory.

the table had not, as yet, been carried by any other people to such a height as here. The immoral assemblage of both sexes at baths and such other places of reunion, which inflamed their sensual feelings, had banished all shame—and we are not here speaking of the usual luxuriousness of the higher ranks; the most common class of females abandoned themselves to these extravagancies without limit or measure.

But how much more cheering to the philanthropist is this excess, than the miserable frugality of want, and the barbarous virtues of ignorance, which oppressed nearly the whole of Europe at that time! The Burgundian period shines pleasingly forth from that dark century, like a lovely spring day from the showers of February. But this very flourishing condition brought the Flemish towns at last to their downfall; Ghent and Bruges, giddy with freedom and overabundance, declared war against Philip the Good, the ruler of 11 provinces, which ended for them as unsuccessfully, as it was presumptuously undertaken. Ghent alone lost many thousand men in the engagement near Havre, and was compelled to conciliate the wrath of the victor by a fine of 400,000 gold florins. All the municipal functionaries and the most eminent citizens of this town, two thousand in number, were obliged, stript to their shirts, barefooted and with uncovered heads, to go to the distance of a French mile to meet the Duke, and on their knees supplicate him for pardon. On this occasion they were deprived

of some valuable privileges; an irreparable loss for their whole future commerce. In the year 1482 they warred, with not much better success, with Maximilian of Austria to deprive him of the guardianship of his son, which he had unjustly assumed; the town of Bruges in 1487 confined the Archduke himself, and had some of his most eminent ministers executed. The Emperor Frederick the 3rd entered their territory with an army, to avenge his son, and kept the harbour of Sluys blockaded for 10 years, by which their entire trade was stopped. On this occasion, Amsterdam and Antwerp, whose jealousy had long been excited by the flourishing condition of the Flemish towns, lent him the most important assistance. The Italians began to bring their own silk stuffs to Antwerp for sale, and the Flemish clothweavers, who had settled in England, likewise sent their goods thither, by which the town of Bruges lost two important branches of trade. Their overweening pride had long since offended the Hanse union, which, also, now left them and removed its factory to Antwerp. In the year 1516 all the foreign merchants left the town, except only a few Spaniards; but its prosperity faded slowly as it had slowly bloomed. Antwerp received in the 16th century the trade, which the luxuriousness of the Flemish towns had banished, and under the government of Charles the 5th, Antwerp was the most stirring and splendid city in the christian world. A stream like the Scheld, whose near and extensive mouth

has the ebb and flow of the tide in common with the North-Sea, and is capable of carrying vessels of the greatest burthen under the walls of Antwerp, made it the natural place of rendez-vous for all vessels which visited that coast. Its freefairs attracted men of business from all countries. *) The industry of the nation had, in the beginning of this century, reached its greatest height. The culture of grain, flax, the breeding of cattle, the chase and fisheries enriched the peasant; arts, manufactures and trade the inhabitant of the towns. It was not long before the products of Flemish and Brabantine industry were seen in Arabia, Persia, and India. Their ships covered the ocean, and we see them in the Black-Sea contend with the Genoese for supremacy. This characteristic distinguished the seaman of the Netherlands: that he made sail at all seasons of the year, and never laid up for the winter. After the new way by the African cape was discovered and the Portuguese East-India trade undermined that of the Levant, the Netherlands did not feel the wound which was inflicted on the Italian Republics; the Portuguese established their mart in Brabant, and the spices of Calicut were now displayed in the Antwerp market. Here poured in the West-Indian merchandise, with which the proud Spanish sloth paid the industry of the Netherlands. The East-Indian market


*) Two such fairs lasted forty days, and all the goods sold there were duty free.

attracted the most celebrated commercial houses from Florence, Lucca and Genoa, and from Augsburg that of Fugger and Welser. Here the Hanse towns brought their northern merchandise, and the English company had here their factory. Art and nature seemed here to expose to view all their riches. It was a splendid exhibition of the works of the creator and of men. Their renown soon extended itself through the whole world. At the end of this century, a company of Turkish merchants solicited permission to settle here and to furnish the products of the East by way of Greece. With the trade in goods arose also the exchange of money. Their bills were current in the furthest parts of the globe. Antwerp, it is asserted, then did more, and more important business, in a fortnight, than Venice at its most flourishing period in two whole years. In the year 1491 the whole Hanse union held its solemn meeting in this town, which it had used to hold formerly only in Lubeck. In the year 1531 the exchange was erected, the most splendid in all Europe at that time, and which fulfilled its proud superscription. The town now reckoned 100,000 inhabitants. The tide of life, the crowd which incessantly thronged here, exceeds all belief. Two hundred, and 250 masts often appeared at one time in its harbour; no day passed, that five hundred vessels did not arrive and depart; on market days this number amounted to 800 or 900. Daily, more than two hundred carriages drove through its ga-

tes; above two thousand waggons were every week seen to arrive from Germany, France and Lorraine, without reckoning the farmers' carts, and cornvans, whose number commonly amounted to 100,000. Thirty thousand hands were employed in this town by the adventurous merchants of the English company alone. In market-dues, tolls and excise the government annually obtained millions. We can form for ourselves an idea of the resources of the nation, when we hear that the extraordinary taxes which they were obliged to pay to Charles the 5th towards his numerous wars, were computed at forty millions of gold ducats.

For this flourishing state of affluence the Netherlands were as much indebted to their liberty as to the natural situation of their country. Wavering laws and the despotic sway of a robber prince would have annihilated all the advantages which propitious Nature had poured on them in such rich abundance. Only the inviolable sanctity of the laws can secure to the citizen the fruit of his industry and inspire him with that happy confidence, which is the soul of all activity. — The Genius of this people, developed by the spirit of commerce and intercourse with so many nations, shone in useful inventions; in the lap of abundance and liberty all the noble arts were matured. From enlightened Italy, to which Cosmo de Medici had lately restored its golden age, painting, architecture, and the art of carving and engraving on copper, were introduced by the Netherlanders into their own

country, where, in a new soil, they bloomed afresh. The Netherlandish school, a daughter of the Italian, soon vied with its mother for the prize, and, in common with it, gave laws to the whole of Europe in the fine arts. The manufactures and arts, on which the Netherlanders principally founded their prosperity and still partly base it, require no farther mention. The weaving of tapestry, oil painting, the art of painting on glass, even pocket watches and sundials, as Guicciardini asserts, were originally invented in the Netherlands; to them we are indebted for the improvement of the compass, the points of which are still known by Netherlandish names. In the year 1482, typography was invented in Harlem, and fate ordained that this useful art, a century afterwards, should reward its country with liberty. The people of the Netherlands united with the most fertile genius for new inventions, a happy talent for improving those of other countries and what was already discovered; there are probably few mechanical arts and manufactures which were not, either produced in this land or, at least, there brought to greater perfection.



THE NETHERLANDS UNDER CHARLES THE 5th.

Up to this time these provinces were the most enviable state in Europe. Not one of the Burgundiae Dukes had allowed himself to think of overturning the constitution; it had remained sacred even to the audacious spirit of Charles the Bold who prepared bondage for a foreign free country. All these princes grew up in no higher expectation than to rule over a republic, and none of their territories could afford experience of a different form of government. Besides, these princes possessed nothing but what the Netherlands gave them, no armies but those the nation sent for them into the field, no riches but what the states granted to them. Now all was changed. Now they had fallen to a master who had at his command other instruments and other resources, who could arm against them a foreign power. *)

*) The unnatural union of two such opposite nations as the Netherlanders and Spaniards, could never turn out fortunately. I cannot here refrain from introducing the comparison which Grotius, in energetic language, has drawn between the two. With the neighbouring people, says he, the Netherlanders could

Charles the 5th ruled with absolute power in his Spanish dominions; in the Netherlands he was no more than the first citizen. The most complete subjection in the south of his realm must have given him contempt for the rights of individuals; here he was reminded to respect them. The more that he there tasted the pleasure of unbounded power, and the greater the opinion of himself, which was forced upon him, with so much the more unwillingness was he here obliged to descend to humble humanity and must the more have been incited

easily maintain a good understanding, for these were of the same origin with themselves and had grown up in the same manner. But Spaniards and Netherlanders, in most things, differed from one another, and, therefore when they met together, clashed the more violently. Both had, for many centuries, been distinguished in war, only the latter had grown out of the use of arms in luxurious repose, while the former had become inured to war, through the Italian and African campaigns; the desire of gain makes the Netherlanders more inclined to peace, but not less susceptible of insult. No people is more free from the lust of conquest, but none defends its own property better. Hence the numerous towns, pressed together in a confined tract of country, densely crowded with foreigners and with their own population, fortified near the sea and the great rivers. Hence foreign arms could not prevail against them for eight centuries after the northern emigrations. Spain, on the contrary, changed its masters far more often; when it at last, fell into the hands of the Goths, its character and its manners had suffered more or less from each conqueror. At the end of all these admixtures this people is described to us as the most patient in labour, the most imperturbable in danger, equally eager for riches and honour, proud to contempt of others, devout and mindful of kindnesses from strangers, but also so reven-

to overcome this obstacle. It requires, indeed, a great degree of virtue not to war against, as hostile to us, the power which resists our most cherished wishes.

The superior power of Charles awakened at the same time that distrust in the Netherlanders, which always attends inferiority. Never were they so alive to the rights of their constitution, never more

geful and of such ungovernable passions in victory, as if neither conscience nor honour were to be regarded in the case of an enemy. All this is foreign to the Netherlander, who is astute but not insidious, who, planted in the middle between France and Germany, tempers in a mild union the faults and good qualities of both. He is not easily imposed upon, nor is he insulted with impunity. In his veneration for the Deity, too, he does not yield to the Spaniard; the arms of the Normans could not make him apostatise from Christianity, when he had once become acquainted with it. No opinion, which the church condemns, had, up to this time, empoisoned the purity of his faith. Nay his pious extravagance went so far that it became requisite to curb by laws the rapacity of his clergy. In both people loyalty to their rulers is innate, with this difference alone, that the Netherlander places the laws above kings. Amongst the other Spaniards, the Castilians require to be governed with the most caution, but the liberties, which they arrogate for themselves, they do not willingly accord to others. Hence the difficult task for their common ruler, so to distribute his attention and care between the two nations, that neither the preference shewn to the Castilians should offend the Netherlanders, nor the placing the latter on an equal footing affront the haughty spirit of the Castilian. *Grotii Annal. Belg. L. 1: 4. 5. seq.*

cautious in negotiations. We find under his government the most violent outbreaks of republican spirit and the pretensions of the nation often carried to an excess, which the advance of the royal power adorned with an appearance of legality. A sovereign will always regard the freedom of the citizen as an alienated district of his dominions which he is bound to recover. To a citizen the authority of the sovereign is a torrent, which inundates his rights. The Netherlanders protect themselves by embankments against their ocean and by constitutional enactments against their princes. The whole history of the world is a perpetually recurring struggle between the lust of power and liberty, for this disputed spot of land, as the history of nature is nothing else but a contest of elements and bodies for space. The Netherlands soon found that they had become the province of a monarchy. So long as their former masters had no higher aim, than to attend to their prosperity, their condition resembled the tranquil happiness of a secluded family whose head is its ruler. Charles the 5th introduced them upon the arena of the political world. They now formed a member of that gigantic body, which the ambition of one individual used as his instrument. They ceased to have themselves for their aim; the centre of their existence was transported to the soul of their ruler. As his whole government was only one tissue of movements or of manoeuvres to advance his power, so it was, above

all things, necessary that he should be master of the various members of his empire, in order to employ them effectually and speedily. It was impossible, therefore, for him to embarrass himself with the tiresome mechanism of their interior civil existence, or to extend to their peculiar rights the conscientious attention, which their republican circumstantiality required. With a bold monarch's step he trod down the ingenious structure of a world of insects. The tribunal at Malines had been, till now, an independent court of jurisdiction; he subjected it to a royal council, which he established in Brussels, and which was an organ of his will. He introduced foreigners into the most vital parts of their constitution, and confided to them the most important offices. These men, who had no support but the royal favour, could be but bad warders of privileges which, moreover, were little known to them. The growing expenditure of his warlike government compelled him to increase his resources. To the disregard of their most sacred privileges he imposed unwonted taxes on the provinces; the states, in order to preserve their respectability, were forced to grant what he had been so modest as not to extort; the whole history of the government of this monarch, in the Netherlands, is almost only one continued list of demanded, refused and finally accorded imposts. Contrary to the constitution he introduced foreign troops into their territories, directed the recruiting of his armies in the provinces, and involved them in wars,

which were indifferent to their interest, if even not injurious to them, and to which they had not given their consent. He punished the offences of a freestate as a monarch, and the terrible chastisement of Ghent announced to them the great change which their constitution had already undergone. The welfare of the country was in so far secured as it was necessary to the political schemes of its master; as the intelligent policy of Charles would certainly not violate the salutary regime of the body which he saw himself necessitated to exert. Fortunately, the opposite pursuits of ambition and of the most disinterested philanthropy often conduct to the same end, and the civil prosperity, which a Marcus Aurelius proposes to himself as an object is occasionally promoted under an Augustus and a Louis.

Charles the 5th was perfectly aware, that commerce was the strength of the nation, and the foundation of their commerce—liberty. He spared their liberty because he needed their strength. Of greater political wisdom, not more just than his son, he subjected his principles to the exigencies of place and time and retracted an ordinance in Antwerp, which he would have supported with all the terror of power in Madrid. That which makes the government of Charles 5th particularly remarkable, as regards the Netherlands, is the great revolution in religious faith, which occurred under it, and which must occupy us somewhat more circumstantially as the principal source of

the succeeding rebellion. This it was that first conducted arbitrary power into the innermost sanctuary of the constitution, taught it to give a dreadful specimen of its ability, and, in a measure, legalised it, while it placed republican spirit on a dangerous eminence. And as the latter descended into anarchy and rebellion, monarchical power ascended to the extreme height of despotism. Nothing is more natural than the transition of civil liberty into religious freedom. The individual as the people, who have, through a happy constitution, once become acquainted with the rights of man, who have been accustomed to examine the law which is to govern them, or have even themselves created that law, whose minds have been enlightened by activity, whose feelings have been expanded by the enjoyments of life, whose natural courage has been exalted by internal security and prosperity, such a people and such an individual will surrender themselves, less easily than others, to the blind dominion of a dull tyrannical creed, and will, earlier than others, emancipate themselves therefrom. Yet another circumstance must have favoured the increase of the new religion in these countries. Italy, then the seat of the greatest mental refinement, a land where formerly the most violent political factions have ever raged, where a burning climate heats the blood to the wildest passions, Italy, it might be objected, remained, among all the European countries, almost the freest from this innovation. But to a romantic people,

who, through a warm and lovely sky, through a luxurious, ever young and ever smiling nature, and the multifarious witcheries of art, are held in a perpetual enjoyment of the senses, a religion was more adapted, whose splendid pomp captivates the senses, whose mysterious enigmas open an unbounded range to the fancy, whose principal doctrines, insinuate themselves into the soul through picturesque forms. To a people, on the contrary, who, through the employments of an ordinary civil life, are drawn down to an unpoetical reality, who live more in plain notions than in images, and who cultivate their common sense at the expense of their imagination — to such a people a creed will recommend itself which dreads investigation less, which lays less stress on mysticism than on morals, and which is better understood than dwelt upon in meditation. In few words: the catholic religion will, on the whole, be found more adapted to a nation of artists, the protestant more fitted to a nation of merchants. On this supposition the new doctrine which L u t h e r diffused in Germany, and C a l v i n in Switzerland, must have found a congenial soil in the Netherlands. Its first germs were scattered in the Netherlands through the protestant merchants, who assembled at Amsterdam and Antwerp. The German and Swiss troops, which Charles introduced into these countries, and the crowd of French, German and English fugitives, who sought to escape in the liberties of Flanders the sword of persecution

which awaited them in their own countries, promoted their diffusion. A great portion of the Netherlandish nobility studied at that time at Geneva, as the Academy of Louvain was not yet in repute, and that of Douai not yet established. The new notions of religion, which were there openly taught, were brought by the youth who went there to study, back into the countries of their birth. These first germs might have been crushed among an isolated people without intercourse with others. The confluence of so many and such different nations in the market towns of Holland and Brabant, must have withdrawn their first increase from the eye of government, and accelerated it under the veil of concealment. A difference in opinion could easily gain ground where there was no general national character, no unity of manners and of laws. In a country, in fine, where industry was the most lauded virtue, mendicity the most despised vice, a slothful order, like the monkhood, must have long been an object of aversion. The new religion which opposed this order, hence derived an immense advantage that, in this respect, it had the popular opinion on its side. Fugitive pamphlets, full of bitterness and satire, to which the newly discovered art of printing gave a more rapid circulation in these lands, and several bands of speakers, called Rederyker, at that time making the circuit of the provinces, ridiculing in theatrical representations or songs the abuses of

their times, contributed not a little to overthrow respect for the Romish church and to prepare a favourable reception for the new doctrine in the dispositions of the people. The first successes of this doctrine went on with astonishing rapidity. The number of those who in a short time avowed themselves of the new sect, especially in the northern provinces, was prodigious; but among these foreigners far outnumbered the native Netherlanders. Charles the 5th who in this great separation of creeds had taken the side which a Despot cannot fail of taking, opposed to the increasing torrent of innovation the most effectual remedies. Unhappily for the reformed religion, political justice was on the side of its persecutor. The dam which, for so many centuries, had repelled human understanding from truth, was torn away too quickly for the outbreacking torrent not to have necessarily overflowed its assigned bed. The reviving spirit of liberty and of scrutiny which ought to have remained within the limits of religious questions, examined now also the rights of kings. While, in the commencement, iron fetters only were broken off, at last a desire was shewn to tear asunder the most legitimate and most necessary ties. The books of scripture, which had become more universally circulated, must now have imparted poison to the most eccentric fanaticism, as well as they did light and nurture to the sincerest love of truth. The good cause had been compelled to choose the evil road of rebellion,

and now succeeded, what must always follow so long as men remain men. The bad cause, too, which had nothing in common with the good but the employment of illegal means, emboldened by this connection appeared in company with the good cause and was mistaken for it. Luther had opposed the praying to saints; every audacious varlet who broke into the churches and cloisters and plundered the altars, was now called a Lutheran. Faction, rapine, fanaticism, licentiousness, robed themselves in his colors; the most enormous offenders, when brought before the judges, avowed themselves of his sect. The reformation had drawn down the Roman prelate to erring humanity — an insane band, stimulated by hunger, wished to annihilate all distinction of ranks. It was natural that a doctrine which announced itself to the state only from its pernicious side, should not have been able to reconcile a monarch who had already so many reasons to extirpate it — and it is no wonder, therefore that he employed against it the arms which itself had forced upon him.

Charles must already have looked upon himself as absolute in the Netherlands when he did not extend to these countries that religious liberty which he had accorded to Germany. While, compelled by the effectual resistance of our princes, he assured to the new religion a free increase here, he caused its persecution there by the most cruel edicts. The reading of the Evangelists and Apostles;

all open or secret meetings, to which religion gave its name in ever so slight a degree; all conversations of this tendency at home and at the table, were forbidden in these edicts under severe penalties. In all the provinces of the country special courts of judicature were established to watch over the execution of the edicts. Whoever cherished erroneous opinions, forfeited his office without regard to his rank. Whoever was convicted of diffusing heretical doctrines or even of only attending the secret meetings of the reformers was condemned to death, and, if a male, executed with the sword, if a female buried alive. Backsliding heretics were committed to the flames. Not even the recantation of the offender could annul these appalling sentences. Whoever abjured his errors had gained nothing thereby, but at farthest a milder kind of death.

The fiefs of a condemned person were confiscated contrary to all the privileges of the country, according to which it was permitted to the heir to redeem them for a small sum of money. Contrary to an express and valuable privilege of a citizen of Holland, not to be tried out of his province, culprits were conveyed beyond the limits of the judicature of their country, and condemned by foreign tribunals. Thus was religion obliged to guide the hand of despotism to attack with sacred grasp, and without danger or opposition, liberties which were inviolable to the secular arm.

Charles the 5th, emboldened by the fortunate progress of his arms in Germany, thought that he might now venture on every thing and seriously meditated establishing the Spanish Inquisition in the Netherlands. But the terror of this name alone brought commerce in Antwerp to a standstill. The principal foreign merchants were prepared to quit the city. Buying and selling ceased. The value of houses fell, the employments of artizans stopped. Money disappeared from the hands of the citizen. Inevitable was the ruin of that flourishing commercial city, if Charles the 5th, convinced by the representations of the Duchess of Parma, had not abandoned this perilous resolve. The Tribunal therefore was recommended to shew forbearance in dealing with foreign merchants and the name of Inquisition was changed into the milder appellation of spiritual judge. But in the other provinces that tribunal proceeded to rage with the inhuman despotism which is peculiar to it. It has been computed that during the government of Charles the 5th 50,000 persons perished by the hand of the executioner for religion alone. If one casts a glance on the violent proceedings of this monarch, one has difficulty in comprehending what it was that kept the rebellion within bounds during his reign, which in the following one broke out with so much fury. A closer investigation will clear up this circumstance. Charles's dreaded superiority of power in Europe had raised the commerce of the Netherlands to a

greatness which it had never before attained. The Majesty of his name opened all harbours to their vessels, cleared for them all seas, and obtained for them the most favourable commercial treaties with foreign powers.

Through him, in particular, they destroyed the dominion of the Hanse towns in the Baltic. The New World, Spain, Italy, Germany, which now shared with them a common ruler, were in a measure, to be considered as provinces of their own country, and lay open to all their undertakings. He had, moreover, united the remaining six provinces with the Burgundian heritage and given to this state an extent and political importance which placed it by the side of the first kingdoms of Europe. *)

*) He had, too, at one time the intention of raising it to a Kingdom; but the essential differences of the Provinces from one another, which extended from constitution and manners to measures and weights, recalled him from this design. More important would have been the service which he extended to them through the Burgundian treaty, wherein its relation to the German empire was settled. According to this treaty the 17 provinces were to contribute to the common wants of the German empire twice as much as an electoral prince, in case of a Turkish war three times as much, for which, however, they were to enjoy the powerful protection of this empire, and not to suffer injury in regard to any of their various privileges. The Revolution which under Charles's son altered the political constitution of the Provinces, again annulled this compact which, on account of the trifling advantage that it conferred, deserves no further notice.

He thereby flattered the national pride of this people. After Gueldres, Utrecht, Friesland and Groningen were incorporated in his dominions all the private wars in these Provinces were discontinued, which for so long a period had disturbed their commerce; an unbroken internal peace allowed them to enjoy all the fruits of their industry. Charles was therefore a benefactor of this people. The splendor of his victories had at the same time dazzled their eyes, the glory of their sovereign, which was reflected upon them also, had bribed their republican vigilance, the awe-inspiring halo of invincibility which encircled the conqueror of Germany, France, Italy and Africa, terrified the factions. And then — who knows not on how much the man — be he private individual or prince — may venture, who has succeeded in enchaining admiration.

His repeated personal appearances in these lands which he, according to his own confession, visited as often as ten different times, held the disaffected within bounds; the constant manifestations of severe and prompt justice maintained the awe of the royal power. Finally, Charles was born in the Netherlands and loved the nation in whose lap he had grown up. Their manners pleased him, the simplicity of their character and intercourse gave him a pleasing recreation from the severe Spanish gravity. He spoke their language and followed their customs in his private life. The burthensome ceremonies, which form the unnatural

barriers between King and people, were banished from Brussels. No jealous foreigner debarred natives from access to their prince — their way to him was through their own countrymen to whom he entrusted his person. He spoke much with them and with pleasure; his deportment was engaging, his discourse obliging. These small artifices won for him their love, and, while his armies trod down their cornfields, while his plundering hands ransacked their property, while his governors oppressed, his executioners slaughtered, he secured their hearts by a friendly demeanour.

Gladly would Charles have seen this affection of the nation for himself descend upon his son. On this very account he sent for him in his youth from Spain, and shewed him in Brussels to his future subjects. On the solemn day of his abdication he recommended to him these lands as the richest jewel in his crown, and earnestly exhorted him to spare their constitution. Philip the 2^d was in every thing that belongs to man, the opposite of his father. As ambitious as Charles, but less acquainted with men and the rights of man, he had proposed to himself an idea of royal authority, which treated men merely as the servile instruments of his despotic will, and was outraged by every symptom of liberty. Born in Spain and educated under the iron rod of monkhood, he required from others also the dismal uniformity and constraint which had become his character. The cheerful merriment of the Netherlanders was

as revolting to his disposition and temper, as their privileges were offensive to his domineering nature. He spoke no other language but the Spanish, endured none but Spaniards about his person, and clung with obstinacy to their customs. In vain that the invention of all the Flemish towns through which he passed, vied in costly festivities to solemnise his presence *), Philip's eye remained dark; all the profusion of magnificence, all the high and rich outpourings of the sincerest joy could not induce upon his countenance one single smile of approbation. Charles entirely missed his aim, when he presented his son to the Flemings. They would, in the sequel, have found his yoke less oppressive, if he had never set his foot in their land. But his look announced to them what they had to expect; his entry into Brussels had lost him all hearts. The friendly affability of the Emperor with this people only served to raise still more obnoxiously the haughty gravity of his son. They had read in his countenance his destructive resolve against their freedom, which he already at that time revolved in his breast. They were prepared to find in him a tyrant and armed to resist him. The throne of the Netherlands was the first, which Charles the 5th abdicated. Before a solemn convention in Brussels he absolved the

*) The town of Antwerp, alone, expended on an occasion of the kind 260,000 gold florins.

States-General of their oath and transferred it to King Philip, his son.

„If my death (he concluded in addressing the latter) had placed you in possession of these countries, so valuable a bequest would, even in that case, have given me a great claim on your gratitude. But now that I, of my free will, transfer them to you, that I hasten to die in order to expedite to you the enjoyment of them, I now require from you that you pay to this people what overplus of debt you may think you, for such a reason, owe me. Other princes esteem themselves happy to felicitate their children with the crown which death demands from them. This happiness I will myself participate with you, I will see you live and reign. Few will follow my example, few have preceded me in a similar act. But my deed will be deserving of praise, if your future life justifies my confidence, if you never swerve from the wisdom which you have hitherto evinced, if you abide immoveably in the purity of the belief which is the firmest pillar of your throne. I add one thing more hereto: May Heaven have granted to you also a son in whose favour you may be able to abdicate the sovereign power, but without being compelled to do so.“

After the emperor had ended, Philip kneeled down before him, pressed his face upon his hand, and received his paternal blessing. His eyes were, for the last time, moistened with a tear. All who stood around wept. It was an hour never to be

forgotten. To this affecting spectacle soon followed another.

Philip received the homage of the assembled states. He took the oath which was proposed to him in the following words: "I Philip, by the grace of God prince of Spain, of the two Sicilies, and so forth, vow and swear that I will be a good and just lord in these countries, earldoms and dukedoms, and so forth, that I will well and truly hold and cause to be held the privileges and liberties of all the dignities, towns, commons and subjects which have been conferred upon them by my predecessors, and further their habits, usages, customs and rights which they now have and enjoy in general and in particular, and moreover, that I will practise all that by right pertains to a good and just prince and lord, so help me God and all his saints!"

The awe which the despotic government of the Emperor had inspired, the distrust of the States towards his son, are already visible in the formula of this oath which was drawn up far more guardedly and precisely, than that to which Charles the 5th himself, and all the Dukes of Burgundy had sworn. Philip was on this occasion compelled to swear also to the maintenance of their customs and usages, which had never been demanded before his time. In the oath which the States took to him, no other obedience is promised, than that which consists with the privileges of the country. His officers have only then to reckon on submission

and support, when they discharge the duties entrusted to them as incumbent on them. Philip, in fine, is named in this oath of allegiance only the natural, the hereditary prince, not sovereign or lord, as the Emperor had desired ; proof enough how small the expectations were which were entertained of the justice and liberality of the new Sovereign !

PHILIP THE 2nd,
RULER OF THE NETHERLANDS.

Philip the 2nd received the Netherlands in the most flourishing period of their prosperity. He was the first of their princes who possessed them complete in number. They now consisted of 17 provinces: the dukedoms of Brabant, Limburg, Luxembourg and Gueldres, the 7 earldoms of Artois, Hainault, Flanders, Namur, Zütphen, Holland and Zeeland, the marquisate of Antwerp and the 5 baronies of Friesland, Mecheln (Malines), Utrecht, Overysse and Gröningen, which, united, formed a great and powerful state able to contend with monarchies. Higher than it then stood their commerce could not rise. Their gold mines were above the earth's surface, but they were more inexhaustible and richer than all the mines in America. These 17 provinces, which, taken together, scarcely equal the fifth part of Italy and do not extend beyond three hundred Flemish miles, brought to their ruler not much less than the whole of Britain produced to its Kings before they appropriated to their crown the possessions of the clergy. Three hundred and fifty cities, alive with enjoyment and labour, many of them fortified by their natural position

without bulwarks and secure without walls; 6300 market towns of a larger size; small villages, farms and castles innumerable, united this territory into one flourishing landscape. At this very time the nation stood at the meridian of its splendour; industry and abundance had exalted the genius of the citizen, enlightened his ideas, ennobled his inclinations; every blossom of the intellect was developed with the blooming condition of the country. A more tranquil blood, chilled by a severe climate, allowed the passions to rage less violently here; equanimity, moderation and enduring patience, the gifts of this northern zone; integrity, justice and faith, the necessary virtues of the commercial profession and the delightful fruits of liberty; truth, benevolence and patriotic pride blended here in soft union with the vices of humanity. No people on earth is more easily governed by an intelligent prince, and none with more difficulty by a pretender or a tyrant. Nowhere is the popular voice so infallible a test of government, as here. True Statesmanship can be tried in no more noble school, and a sickly artificial policy has none worse to fear.

A state like this could act and endure with gigantic strength, if pressing necessity called forth its power, if a skilful and sparing administration opened up its resources. Charles the 5th left to his successor a power in these lands, which differed little from that of a limited monarchy. The royal authority had perceptibly raised itself above the republican power, and that complicated machine

could now be set in motion almost as certainly and rapidly as an absolutely governed state. The numerous and formerly so powerful nobility now followed their Sovereign to his wars with willingness, or courted in peaceful employments the smile of royalty. The crafty policy of the crown had created new and imaginary goods of which it alone was the distributor. New passions and new ideas of happiness supplanted, at last, the rude simplicity of republican virtue. Pride gave place to vanity, liberty to honour, poor independence to a voluptuous slavery. To oppress or to plunder their native land as the absolute Satraps of an absolute lord, was a more powerful allurements for the rapacity and ambition of the great, than on the day of the imperial diet to divide with the Sovereign the hundredth part of his power. A great portion, moreover, of the nobility were sunk in poverty and heavy debts. Under the specious pretext of honorary distinctions, Charles the 5th had weakened the most dangerous vassals of the crown through expensive embassies to foreign courts. Thus, William of Orange was sent to Germany with the imperial crown, and the Earl of Egmont to close the alliance of Philip with the Queen Mary. Both accompanied the Duke of Alba also afterwards to France to conclude the peace between the two crowns, and the new engagement of their King with Madame Elisabeth. The expenses of these journeys amounted to 300,000 florins of which the King did not contribute one penny. When the

Prince of Orange was appointed Generalissimo in place of the Duke of Savoy, he was compelled himself alone to support all the expenses, which this office made necessary. When foreign ambassadors or princes came to Brussels, it was incumbent on the Netherlandish nobles to maintain the honor of their King, who dined alone and never kept open table. The Spanish policy had invented still more ingenious means to gradually weaken the richest families of the land. Every year one of the Castilian nobles made his appearance in Brussels, where he exhibited a lavish magnificence and lived at an expense, which far exceeded his means. To be distanced by him in this expenditure, would have been esteemed in Brussels an indelible disgrace. All vied in endeavours to surpass him and exhausted their fortunes in this dear contest, while the Spaniard betook himself home in good time, and made good again the extravagance of a single year by a four year's frugality. It was the foible of the Netherlandish nobility to contend with every stranger for the credit of being thought wealthy, of which weakness the government well knew how to avail itself. Certainly, these arts had, in the sequel, not so fortunate a result as had been calculated on; for these oppressive burthens of debt made the nobility more inclined towards any innovation, because he who has lost all, can only be a gainer in the general ruin. The church had ever been a support of the royal power and was so of necessity. Its golden time always happened

during the bondage of the human intellect, and we see it, like royalty, gain by inbecility and sensuality. Civil oppression made religion more necessary and more dear; blind submission to tyrannical power prepares the disposition for a blind, convenient faith, and the hierarchy repaid despotism its services with interest. The bishops and prelates in parliament were zealous supporters of royalty and ever ready to sacrifice the welfare of the citizen to the advantage of the church and the state interests of the sovereign. Numerous and brave garrisons held the cities in awe, which were at the same time divided by religious squabbles and factions, and thus uncertain of their most powerful support. How little, therefore, did it require to protect this preponderance of power, and how enormous must have been the oversight by which it was destroyed.

Philip's authority in these lands, though great, did not surpass the influence which the Spanish monarchy had, at that time, acquired throughout the whole of Europe. No state ventured to enter the arena of contest with it. France, its most dangerous neighbour, weakened by a heavy war, and still more through internal factions, which raised their heads during the government of a child, advanced with rapid step to that unhappy epoch, which, during almost half a century, made it a theatre of abomination and misery. Elisabeth of England could with difficulty protect her own still tottering throne against the storms of factions,

and her new and still unsettled church against the concealed attempts of exiles. That country was still to ascend, at her creative call, from a humble obscurity, and to receive from the faulty policy of its rival the vigorous powers, with which it finally overthrew the latter. The German imperial family was united with that of Spain by the double ties of blood and political advantage, and the increasing military success of Soliman drew its attention more to the east than to the west of Europe. Gratitude and fear secured to Philip the Italian princes, and his creatures ruled the Conclave. The monarchies of the North still lay in barbarous darkness, or only just began to acquire form, and the state system of Europe did not recognise them. The most skilful generals, numerous armies accustomed to victory, a formidable marine, and the rich golden tribute, which now first began to come in regularly and certainly — what terrible instruments were these in the firm and steady hand of a talented prince! Under such fortunate stars did King Philip commence his reign.

Before we see him act, we must cast a cursory glance into his soul, and find here a key to his political life. Joy and benevolence were wanting in the character of this prince. His temperament and his early gloomy childhood denied him the former; the latter could not be imparted to him by men who wanted the sweetest and most powerful social tie. Two ideas, his own self and what was above that self, engrossed his contracted mind.

Egotism and religion were the contents and the superscription of his whole life. He was a King and a Christian, and was bad in both characters; he was never fitted to be a man among men, because he never descended, but only ascended from himself. His belief was dark and cruel; for his Divinity was a Being of terror, from whom he had nothing more to hope, but only to fear. To the common man the Divinity appears as a Comforter, as a Saviour; to him it was a fearful image, placed before him, a painful, humiliating check to his human omnipotence. His veneration for this Being was so much the deeper and more rooted, the less it distributed itself on other objects. He trembled servilely before God, because God was the only Being before whom he had to tremble. Charles the 5th was zealous for religion, because religion laboured for him. Philip was so because he really believed therein. The former caused fire and sword to rage against thousands for the sake of dogmas, and he himself derided in the person of the Pope, his captive, the doctrine to which he offered up the blood of men; Philip resolved on the most just war against the Pope only with repugnance and alarm of conscience, and divested himself of all the fruits of victory like a penitent malefactor of his booty. The Emperor was cruel from calculation, his son from conviction. The first possessed a stronger and more enlightened spirit, but was, perhaps, therefore, a worse man; the second was of a narrower and weaker mind, but he was

more just. Both, however, as it appears to me, might have been better men, than they actually were, and on the whole, have acted on the very same principles. What we lay to the charge of personal character, is very often the infirmity, the necessary imperfection of universal human nature. A monarchy of this extent was too great a trial for human pride, and too difficult a task for human powers. To combine universal happiness with the highest liberty of the individual, belongs to the infinite mind which diffuses itself omnipresently over all. But what resource has man in the position of the Creator? Man aids his circumscribed powers by classification, he establishes, like the naturalist, marks and a rule which facilitate his undecided glance in the general survey, and in which all the individuals of the species must agree. This aid is furnished to him by religion. She finds hope and fear sown in every human breast; by having made herself mistress of these emotions, and having subjected them to an object, she has transformed millions of independent beigns into one uniform abstract. The endless variety of the human will, no longer confuses its ruler — now there exists a universal Evil and a universal Good, that he can display and withdraw, that works in unison with him even there also, where he himself is not. Now there exists a limit, at which liberty stands still, a venerable, hallowed line, to which all the conflicting inclinations of the Will must finally be directed. The common aim of despotism

and of priestcraft is uniformity, and uniformity is a necessary expedient of human poverty and imperfection. Philip was, of necessity, so much the more a despot than his father, as his mind was more contracted, or, in other words: he must have adhered so much the more anxiously to general rules, the less he could descend to species and individuals. What is the inference from all this? Philip the 2nd could have no higher solicitude, than the uniformity of belief and political constitution, because without these he could not reign.

And, yet, he would have opened his government with more mildness and forbearance, if he had entered upon it earlier. In the opinion which is usually formed of this prince, it seems that one circumstance is not enough considered, which ought in fairness to be weighed in the history of his mind and heart.

Philip counted nearly thirty years, when he ascended the Spanish throne, and his precocious understanding had prematurely accelerated his majority. A mind like his, which felt its maturity, and was all too much accustomed to high expectations, could not endure the yoke of childish subjection but with repugnance; the superior genius of the father and the absolute authority of the autocrat must have weighed heavily on the self-satisfied pride of his son. The share, which the former allowed him in the government of the empire, was just important enough to withdraw his mind from petty passions, and to maintain

the severe gravity of his character; but also fully sparing enough, to kindle still more fiercely his longing after unlimited power. When he actually became possessed of this power, it had lost the charm of novelty for him. The sweet intoxication of a young monarch, who is surprised by the possession of supreme authority; that joyous tumult of emotions, which opens the soul to every softer sentiment, and from which humanity has already gained so many benevolent institutions, was in him long passed, or had never existed, His character was hardened when fortune put him to this severe test, and his settled principles withstood this beneficial emotion. He had had time during fifteen years, to prepare himself for this transition, and instead of youthfully dallying with the external marks of his new condition, or of losing the morning of his government in the intoxication of an idle vanity, he remained composed and serious enough, to enter at once on the full possession of his power, so as to revenge himself through the most extensive employment of it, for its having been so long withheld from him.



THE TRIBUNAL OF THE INQUISITION.

Philip the 2nd no sooner saw himself through the peace of Chateau-Cambresis in quiet possession of his kingdom, than he turned his whole attention to the great work of purifying the religion, and verified the fears of his Netherlandish subjects. The ordinances, which his father had caused to be promulgated against heretics, were renewed in their full force; and terrible tribunals, to whom nothing but the name of Inquisition was wanting, watched over their execution. But his work appeared to him scarce half accomplished, so long as he could not transplant into these countries the Spanish Inquisition in its perfect form — a design in which the Emperor had already suffered shipwreck.

This Spanish Inquisition is an institution of a new kind and peculiar order, which finds no prototype in the whole course of time and admits of comparison with no ecclesiastical, nor civil tribunal. Inquisition has existed from the time when reason meddled with what is holy, and since the existence of sceptics and innovators; but it was first about the middle of the 13th century, after

some examples of apostacy had alarmed the hierarchy, that Innocent the 3rd erected for it a peculiar tribunal and separated, in an unnatural manner, ecclesiastical superintendence and instruction from the power which inflicts punishment. In order to be the more sure that no human sensibility and no bribing of natural tenderness should relax the rigid severity of its statutes, he took it out of the hands of Bishops and the secular clergy who, through the ties of civil life, were still too much attached to humanity, and gave it to the monks, a spurious order of the human name, who had abjured the sacred feelings of nature and were servile creatures of the Roman See. Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and France received this institution; a Franciscan monk sat as judge in the terrible sentence passed on the Templars. Some few states succeeded in excluding this Court, or in subjecting it to the lay authority. The Netherlands had remained free from it until the government of Charles the 5th; their Bishops exercised the spiritual censorship, and, in extraordinary cases, reference was made to foreign inquisitorial courts; by the French provinces to Paris, by the German to Cologne. But the Inquisition which is here spoken of, came from the west of Europe, and was of a different origin and form. The last Moorish throne in Grenada had fallen in the 15th century, and the Saracen form of worship had finally succumbed to the superior fortune of the Christian. But the Gospel was still new,

and but little firmly established in this youngest of Christian Kingdoms, and in the confused mixture of heterogeneous laws and manners, the religions had not yet become distinct. It is true, the sword of persecution had driven many thousand families to Africa, but a far larger portion, detained by the loved climate of their home, purchased remission from this dreadful necessity with the show of pretended conversion, and continued to serve on Christian altars, their Muhammed and Moses. So long as their prayers were offered towards Mecca, Grenada was not subdued; so long as the new Christian, in the innermost recesses of his house, became again Jew or Moslem he was as little secured to the throne as to the Romish See. It was not now, sufficient to compel this perverse people into the exterior form of a new faith, or to wed it to the victorious church by the weak bands of ceremonials; the object was now, to extirpate the roots of an old religion, and to subdue an obstinate bias, which had been implanted by the slowly operating power of centuries, in their manners, their language and their laws, and remained in perpetual exercise through the enduring influence of their paternal soil and sky.

If the church desired to celebrate a complete victory over the opposing worship, and to secure her new conquest beyond all chance of relapse, it was requisite for her to undermine the foundation itself, on which the old religion was built. It was necessary to break to pieces the entire form of

moral character to which it was attached at core. It was necessary for her to unfasten its secret roots in the most concealed depths of the soul; to extinguish all traces of it in the circle of domestic life and in the civil world; to cause all recollection of it to perish and, if possible, to destroy even the susceptibility for its impressions. Country and family, conscience and honor, the sacred feelings of society and of nature, are ever the first and nearest with which religions unite themselves, from which they derive, and to which they impart strength. This connection was now to be dissolved, it was necessary to tear, by violence, the old religion from the holy feelings of nature — even at the expense of the sanctity itself of these emotions. Thus arose the inquisition, which, to distinguish it from the more humane tribunals which bear that name, we call the spanish. The founder of it was Cardinal Ximenes; a Dominican monk. Torquemada, was the first who ascended its bloody throne, who established its statutes, and for ever cursed his order with this bequest. Degradation of the understanding and murder of intellect, is its vow; its instruments are terror and infamy. Every passion stands in its pay; its snare is set in every joy of life. Solitude itself is not solitary for it; the fear of its omnipresence holds freedom itself fettered in the recesses of the soul. It has prostrated all the instincts of human nature before religious belief; to it yield all the ties which man otherwise held most sacred. All the

claims upon his race are forfeited by a heretic; by the most trivial infidelity to his mother church, he has divested himself of his nature. A modest doubt in the infallibility of the pope meets with the punishment of parricide and the infamy of sodomy; its sentences resemble the frightful corruption of the plague, which turns the most healthy body into rapid putrefaction. Even the inanimate things, which belong to a heretic, are accursed; no destiny can intercept the victim of the inquisition: its decisions are executed on corpses and pictures; and the grave itself is no asylum from its tremendous arm. The presumption of its sentences can only be surpassed by the inhumanity with which it executes them. By coupling the ludicrous with the terrible, and by amusing the eye with the strangeness of its processions, it weakens compassion by the gratification of another feeling; it drowns sympathy in derision and contempt. The delinquent is conducted with solemn pomp to the place of execution, a blood-red flag is displayed before him, the universal clang of all the bells accompanies the procession. First come priests in the robes of the Mass, and sing a sacred hymn; they are followed by the condemned sinner, clothed in a yellow vest, on which are seen the images of black devils. On his head he wears a paper cap which terminates in a human figure, surrounded by lambent flames of fire, and around which ghastly demons flit. The image of the crucified Saviour is carried, turned away from the

eternally condemned sinner; salvation is no longer available for him. His mortal body belongs to the fire, as his immortal soul to the flames of hell. A gag closes his mouth and prevents him from alleviating his pain in lamentations, from awakening compassion by his affecting tale, and from divulging the secrets of the holy tribunal. He is followed by the clergy, in festive apparel, by the magistrates and the nobility; the fathers, who have been his judges, close the awful procession. One expects to see a corpse which is conveyed to the grave, and, behold, it is a living person, whose torments are now so horribly to entertain the people. These executions are generally held on solemn feast days, for which a certain number of such unfortunates are kept together in the prisons of the holy house, in order to enhance the deed by the multitude of the victims; and, then, the King himself is present. He sits with uncovered head, on a lower chair than that of the Grand Inquisitor, to whom on such a day he gives a rank superior to his own — and who, then, will not tremble before a tribunal near which Majesty itself sinks?

The great reformation of Luther and Calvin renewed the necessity which had given to this tribunal its first origin: and what, at the commencement, was only invented to clear the small kingdom of Grenada from the weak remains of Saracens and Jews, was now required for the whole of Catholic Christendom. All the Inquisitions in Portugal, Italy, Germany and France adopted the

form of the Spanish; it followed Europeans to the Indies, and established in Goa a fearful tribunal, whose inhuman proceedings make us shudder even in the description. Wherever it planted its foot, devastation followed; but it raged in no part of the world, as it did in Spain. The dead are forgotten, whom it sacrificed; the human race renews itself again, and the lands, too, which it has devastated and depopulated, bloom once more; but centuries will pass away, before its traces disappear from the Spanish character. An intellectual, excellent nation has been stopped by it on the road to perfection; genius has been banished by it from a climate where it was indigenous, and a stillness, like that which rests on the grave, has been left in the mind of a people, who were entitled to happiness, before many others which inhabit this quarter of the globe.

The first Inquisitor in Brabant was appointed by Charles the 5th in the year 1522. Some priests were associated with him as coadjutors; but he himself was a lay-man. After the death of Adrian the 6th, his successor, Clement the 7th, appointed three Inquisitors for all the Netherlandish provinces, and Paul the 3rd again reduced this number to two, which continued until the commencement of the troubles. In the year 1530, with the aid and approbation of the States, the edicts against heretics were promulgated, which formed the foundation of all that followed, and in which also express mention is made of the Inquisition.

In the year 1550, Charles the 5th saw himself compelled, by the rapid increase of sects, to renew and sharpen these edicts, and it was on this occasion that the town of Antwerp opposed the inquisition, and succeeded, too, in escaping it. But the spirit of this Netherlandish inquisition was, according to the genius of the country, more humane than in the Kingdom of Spain, and had been, as yet, administered by no foreigner, much less by a Dominican. The edicts, which every body knew, served it as a line of action; and, on this very account, it appeared less obnoxious, because, however severe its judgments, it seemed less a tool of arbitrary power, and it did not, like the Spanish Inquisition, veil itself in secrecy. Philip, however, was desirous of paving a way into the Netherlands, even for this latter tribunal, since it appeared to him the instrument best adapted to destroy the spirit of this people, and prepare them for a despotic government. He began, therefore, by increasing the severity of the religious ordinances of his father; by extending more and more the power of the Inquisitors; by making its proceedings more arbitrary and more independent of the civil jurisdiction. The tribunal soon wanted little more than the name and Dominicans, to make it the Spanish Inquisition. Bare suspicion was enough to snatch a citizen from the lap of public tranquillity and from his family circle, and the weakest evidence justified the use of the rack. Whoever fell into this abyss, returned no more.

For him all the benefits of the laws ceased. The maternal care of justice no longer noticed him. Beyond the pale of his former world, malice and idiotcy judged him according to laws, which were never intended for men. The delinquent never knew his accuser, and very seldom his crime, a flagitious, devilish artifice, which constrained the unhappy victim to guess at his error, and, in the delirium of the rack, or in the weariness of a long living interment, to acknowledge transgressions, which perhaps had never been committed, or, at least, had never come to the judges' knowledge. The goods of the condemned were confiscated, and the denouncer encouraged by letters of grace and rewards. No privilege, no civil jurisdiction was valid against the holy power. The secular arm had lost whomsoever that power touched. It had no farther share in the judicial duties of the latter than to execute its sentences with humble submission. The consequences of such an institution were, of necessity, unnatural and horrible. The whole temporal happiness, the life itself of an innocent man was now delivered into the hands of every worthless fellow. Every concealed enemy, every envious person, had now the perilous inducement of an unseen and unfailing revenge. The security of property, the sincerity of intercourse were gone, All the ties of profit were dissolved, all those of blood and of affection. An infectious distrust envenomed social life; the dreaded presence of a spy terrified the eye from seeing, and choked the voice

in the throat. No one believed in the existence of an honest man, or passed for one himself. Good name, the ties of country, brotherhood, oaths themselves, and all that men held sacred, were fallen in their value. — Such was the destiny to which a great, flourishing commercial town was subjected, where 100,000 industrious men had been brought together by the solitary tie of confidence. Every one indispensable to his neighbour, and yet every one ambiguous, distrustful. All attracted by the desire of gain, and repelled from each other by fear. All the props of society torn away, where society is the basis of all life and of all existence. *)

*) Grotius L. I. 9, 10.

OTHER ENCROACHMENTS ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NETHERLANDS.


It is no wonder that so unnatural a tribunal, which was intolerable even to the more patient spirit of the Spaniard, caused the revolt of a free state. But the terror, which it inspired, was increased by the Spanish troops, which were detained in the country even after the restoration of peace, and, in violation of the constitution, garrisoned border-towns. Charles the 5th had been forgiven for this introduction of foreign armies, while the necessity of it was perceived and his good intentions were more confided in. Now, men saw in these troops only the alarming preparations of oppression and the instruments of a detested hierarchy. A respectable body of cavalry, composed of natives and fully adequate for the protection of the country, made these foreigners superfluous. The licentiousness and rapacity of these Spaniards, who had still to demand great arrears of pay, and paid themselves at the expense of the citizens, completed the exasperation of the people and drove the lower orders to despair. Subsequently, when the general murmur induced the government to move

them from the frontiers and transport them into the islands of Zealand, where ships were prepared for their deportation, their audacity went so far, that the inhabitants left off working at the embankments, and preferred resigning their native country to the sea, rather than suffer longer from the wanton brutality of these lawless bands. Gladly would Philip have detained these Spaniards in the country, in order, by their presence, to impart more force to his edicts, and support the innovations, which he was resolved on making in the constitution of the Netherlands. He regarded them as a guarantee for the submission of the nation and as a chain by which he held it captive. For this reason he left nothing untried to evade the persevering importunity of the States, who desired the withdrawal of these Spaniards, and on this point he exhausted all the resources of chicanery and persuasion. At one time, he dreaded a sudden invasion on the part of France, which, torn by furious factions, could scarce support itself against a domestic enemy; at another time, they were to receive his son Don Carlos at the frontiers, whom he never intended should leave Castile. Their maintenance was not to burthen the nation; he himself would bear all the expenses from his private purse. In order to detain them with the more appearance of reason, he intentionally kept back from them their arrears of pay; for he would, certainly, otherwise have preferred them to the troops of the country, whose demands he fully satisfied. To lull the fears of

the nation, and to pacify the general discontent, he offered to both the favourites of the people, the Prince of Orange and the Count of Egmont, the chief command of these troops; both, however, declined his offer with the noble-minded declaration: that they could never resolve to serve, contrary to the laws of the country. The more desire the king shewed to keep his Spaniards in the country, the more obstinately the States insisted on their removal. In the following Diet at Ghent, he was compelled, in the very centre of his courtiers, to listen to republican truth. "Why are foreign hands needed for our defence?" said the Syndic of Ghent to him. "Is it that the rest of the world should consider us too thoughtless, or too imbecile to protect ourselves? Why have we concluded peace, if the burthens of war are still to oppress us? Necessity gave us power to sustain the calamities of war; but we cannot endure them in peace. Or shall we be able to keep in order these licentious bands, which thine own presence has been inadequate to restrain? Here stand thy subjects from Cambray and Antwerp, and cry, for redress. Thionville and Marienburg lie waste, and, surely, thou hast not bestowed upon us peace, that our cities should become deserts, as they necessarily must if thou freest them not from these destroyers? Perhaps thou art desirous of guarding thyself against surprise from our neighbours. This precaution is wise, but the report of their preparations will long precede their arms. Why engage, at a heavy expense,

foreigners, who will not protect a country which they must leave to morrow? Valiant Netherlanders are still at thy command, to whom thy father entrusted the republic in far more tempestuous times. Why wilt thou now doubt of their loyalty, which for so many centuries, they have preserved to thy ancestors inviolate? Will not they be able to support the war, until thy confederates hasten to their banners, or thou thyself sendest help from the neighbouring country?" — This language was to the King too new, and its truth too obvious, for him to be able to reply to it immediately. "I, too, am a foreigner!" he at length exclaimed, "will they not rather expel me, too, from the country?" At the same time he descended from the throne, and left the assembly; but the speaker was pardoned for his boldness. Two days afterwards, he caused the states to be informed: that if he had earlier known, that these troops were a burthen to them, he would have, before, made preparation to take them back immediately with himself to Spain. Now, this was clearly too late, as they would not depart unpaid; but he promised, in the most sacred manner, that this burthen should not oppress them longer than four months. Nevertheless, these troops remained in the country 18 months, instead of four, and would, perhaps, have left it still later, if the exigencies of the state had not made them more necessary in another part of the world. The violent introduction of foreigners into the most im-

portant offices of the country occasioned fresh complaints against the government. Of all the privileges of the Provinces, none was so obnoxious to the Spaniards, as that which excluded strangers from office, and there was none they had so zealously endeavoured to undermine. Italy, both Indies, and all the provinces of this vast empire, were opened to their rapacity and ambition; it was only from the richest of all, that an inexorable, fundamental law kept them out. They persuaded the monarch that the power of the sovereign would never be firmly established in these countries, so long as it could not employ foreigners as implements. The Bishop of Arras, a Burgundian by birth, had already been illegally forced upon the Flemings, and now the Count of Feria, a Castilian, was to receive a seat and voice in the Council of State. But this attempt found a more courageous resistance, than the flatterers of the King had led him to expect, and his despotic omnipotence was this time wrecked by the art of William of Orange and the firmness of the States.



WILLIAM OF ORANGE AND THE COUNT OF EGMONT.

It was thus that Philip ushered in his government of the Netherlands, and such were the grievances of the nation when he was prepared to leave them. He had long wished himself out of a land where he was a stranger, where there was so much that offended his feelings, and where his despotic mind found such undaunted monitors of the laws of freedom. The peace with France, at last, permitted him this withdrawal; the armaments of Soliman drew him to the South, and the Spaniards also began to miss their King. The choice of a supreme Stattholder for the Netherlands was the principal matter, which still occupied him. Duke Emanuel Philibert of Savoy had filled this place since the resignation of the Queen Mary of Hungary, which, however, so long as the King himself was present in the Netherlands, conferred more honor, than real influence. His absence made it the most important office in the monarchy, and the most splendid object at which the ambition of a subject could aim. It was now vacant through the departure of the

Duke, to whom the peace of Chateau Cambresis had restored the possession of his country. The almost unlimited power, which it was necessary to intrust to the supreme Stattholder, the capabilities and knowledge which such an extensive and delicate appointment required, but, especially, the daring designs contemplated by the government against the freedom of the country, the execution of which would depend on him, necessarily embarrassed the choice. The law, which excluded all foreigners from office, made an exception in the case of the supreme Stattholder. As he could not be, at the same time a native of all the provinces, it was allowable for him not to belong to any one of them; for the jealousy of a man of Brabant would concede no greater right thereto to a Fleming, whose home was a half mile from his frontier, than to a Sicilian, who lived in another soil and under a different sky. But here the advantage of the crown itself seemed to favour a citizen of the Netherlands. A native of Brabant for example, whose country surrendered itself, to him with unbounded confidence, could, if he was a traitor, have already given the fatal blow, before a foreigner surmounted the distrust, which watched over his most insignificant actions. If the government had carried through its designs in one province, the opposition of the rest would be a temerity, which it would be justified in punishing in the severest manner. In the common whole, which the provinces now formed, their

individual constitutions were, in a measure, destroyed; the obedience of a single one was a law for all, and the privilege, which one knew not how to preserve, was lost for all the others.

Among the Netherlandish nobles, who could lay claim to the Chief Stattholdership, the expectations and wishes of the nation were divided between the Count of Egmont and the Prince of Orange, who were called thereto by equal nobility of descent, entitled by equal merits, and welcome to the nation through equal attachment of the people to them. An illustrious rank had placed both next to the throne, and if the eye of the monarch searched for the worthiest, it must necessarily fall upon one of these two. As, in the sequel of the history, we must often mention both names, the attention of the reader cannot be drawn early enough to them. William, the "Prince of Orange," was descended from the princely German house of Nassau, which had already flourished eight centuries, had contended for preeminence with that of Austria, and had given one Emperor to Germany. Besides several rich possessions in the Netherlands, which made him a citizen of this State and a born vassal of Spain, he possessed also in France the independent principedom of Orange. William was born in the year 1533, at Dillenburg, in the country of Nassau, of a Countess Stolberg. His father, the Count of Nassau, of the same name, had adopted the Protestant religion, wherein he caused his son

also to be educated, but Charles the 5th, who early formed an attachment for the boy, took him, when quite young, to his court and had him brought up in the Catholic faith. This Monarch, who already discovered in the child the future great man, kept him nine years about his person, thought him worthy of his instruction in the affairs of government, and honored him with a confidence beyond his years. He, alone, was permitted to remain with the Emperor when he gave audience to foreign ambassadors — a proof that, as a boy, he must already have begun to deserve the glorious cognomen of the Silent. The Emperor was not ashamed, once even to confess openly, that this young man often gave him suggestions, which would have escaped his own sagacity. What expectations might not be formed of the intellect of a man, who was formed in such a school!

William was 23 years old when Charles abdicated the government, and had already received from the latter two public marks of the highest esteem. The Emperor, to the exclusion of all the nobles of his court, entrusted to him the honorable office of conveying to his brother Ferdinand the imperial crown. When the Duke of Savoy, who commanded the imperial army in the Netherlands, was called away to Italy by the affairs of his own country, the Emperor committed to Orange the supreme command over these troops, against the representations of his whole military council, to whom it appeared altogether too ha-

zardous, to oppose a youth to the experienced generals of France. Absent, and without the recommendation of any one, the monarch preferred him to the laurel-crowned band of his heroes, and the result gave him no cause to repent of his choice.

The eminent favour, in which the prince had stood with the father, would, in itself alone, have been an important ground to exclude him from the confidence of the son. Philip, it appears, had laid it down for himself as a rule, to revenge the Spanish nobility on the Netherlandish for the preference by which Charles the 5th had, on all occasions, distinguished the latter. More important, however, were the secret motives which alienated him from the prince. William of Orange belonged to those lean and pale men, as Caesar terms them "who sleep not at night and think too much", before whom the most fearless of spirits quailed. The calm tranquillity of a never varying countenance concealed a busy, ardent soul, which moved not even the veil behind which it worked, and was alike inaccessible to artifice and to love; a diversified, formidable, never wearied mind, pliant and flexible enough to be instantaneously moulded into all forms; guarded enough to lose itself in none; strong enough to endure every vicissitude of fortune. In seeing through men and in winning hearts, there existed no greater master than William; not that he, after the fashion of the Court, permitted his life to assume a servility, to which his proud heart gave the lie; but, because he was

neither sparing, nor too profuse of the marks of his favour and esteem, and through a skilful economy of that, which binds men, increased his real stock of these means. The fruits of his intellect were as perfect, as they were slow in being developed; his resolve was as steadily and unshakenly accomplished, as it was long in being matured. No opposition could baffle the plan to which he had once paid homage as the best; no accidents could crush it, for all had appeared before his mind, before they actually came into existence. High as his feelings were raised above terror and joy, they were equally subjected to fear; but his fear was earlier than the danger, and he was calm in tumult, because he had trembled in repose. William lavished his gold with extravagance, but he was a niggard of his moments. The hour at table was the single hour of relaxation, but this was devoted entirely to his heart, his family and friendship; a modest deduction which he made from the care of his country. Here his brow cleared up with wine, which his cheerful disposition and his temperance seasoned, and serious cares could not here cloud the cheerfulness of his temper. His household was magnificent; the splendour of a numerous retinue, the number and respectability of those who surrounded his person, made his habitation like the court of a sovereign prince. A sumptuous hospitality, the master spell of demagogues, was the Goddess of his palace. Foreign princes and ambassadors found

here a reception and entertainment, which surpassed all that luxurious Belgium could offer to them. An humble submissiveness to the government bought off the blame and suspicion, which this expense would have thrown on his intentions. But this profusion maintained his name with the people, to whom nothing was more flattering, than to see the riches of their country displayed before foreigners, and the high pinnacle of fortune, on which he was seen to stand, enhanced the value of the courtesy to which he condescended. No one, probably, was ever born, better calculated for the leader of a conspiracy, than William the Silent. A firm, penetrating glance into the past, the present and the future; the art of rapidly availing himself of opportunities; the power of swaying all minds, of framing vast projects, which shew form and symmetry, only to the far distant contemplator, and bold calculations, which were spun down the long chain of futurity, all these faculties were possessed by him under the direction of that free and enlightened virtue, which moves with firm step, even on the very verge of its excess.

A man like this might, at other times, have remained unfathomed by his whole generation; but not to the distrustful spirit of the century in which he lived. Philip the 2nd saw quickly and deeply into a character, which, among good ones, most resembled his own. If he had not seen through him so clearly, it would be inex-

plicable, how he did not bestow his confidence on a man, in whom were united nearly all the qualities, which he prized highest and could best appreciate. But William had another point of contact with Philip the 2^d, which was more important. He had learned his policy from the same master, and had become, as it was to be feared, a more apt scholar. Not, because he made the Prince of Machiavell his study, but because he had enjoyed the living instruction of a monarch, who brought that book into practice, it was, that he had become versed in the perilous arts, by which thrones fall and rise. Philip had here to do with an antagonist, who was armed against his policy, and who, with a good cause, could command the resources of a bad one also. And it is exactly this last circumstance, which explains to us, why he hated this man, among all the mortals of his age, most implacably, and had so supernatural a dread of him.

The suspicion, which already attached to the prince, was increased by the ambiguity of his religious bias. William believed in the pope, so long as the Emperor, his benefactor, lived; but it was feared, with good ground, that the predilection, which had been imparted to his young heart, for the reformed religion, had never entirely left him. Whatever church he may have, at certain periods of his life, preferred, each might console itself with the reflection, that none possessed him entirely. We see him, in later years, go over to

Calvanism with almost as little scruple, as, in his early childhood, he deserted the Lutheran religion for the Romish. He defended the rights of the Protestants as those of men, rather than their opinions, against the Spanish tyranny; not their faith, their injuries had made him their brother.

These general grounds for suspicion appeared to be justified by a discovery, which accident made, concerning his real intentions. William had remained in France as hostage for the peace of Chateau-Cambresis, in concluding which he had borne a part, and here, through the imprudence of Henry the 2nd, who imagined he spoke with a confidant of the King of Spain, he became acquainted with a secret plot, which the French Court had formed with the Spanish, against the Protestants of both Kingdoms. The Prince hastened to communicate this important discovery to his friends in Brussels, whom it so nearly concerned, and the letters, which he exchanged on the subject, fell, unfortunately, into the hands of the King of Spain. Philip was less surprised at this decisive disclosure of William's sentiments, than incensed at the destruction of his plot; but the Spanish nobles, who had not yet forgiven the prince that moment, when the greatest of Emperors, in the last act of his life, leaned upon his shoulders, did not neglect this favourable opportunity of finally ruining, in the good opinion of their King, the betrayer of a state-secret.

Of no less noble lineage, than William, was

Lamoral, Count of Egmont and Prince of Gavre, a descendent of the Dukes of Gueldres, whose martial courage had wearied out the arms of the house of Austria. His race was renowned in the annals of the country; one of his ancestors had already, under Maximilian, filled the office of Stattholder over Holland. Egmont's marriage with the Duchess Sabina of Bavaria raised, still higher, the splendour of his birth, and made him powerful through the importance of his connections. Charles the 5th had created him a knight of the golden Fleece, in the year 1516, in Utrecht; the wars of this Emperor were the school of his future renown, and the battle of St. Quentin and Gravelines made him the hero of his century. Every benefit of peace, for which commercial people feel most grateful, brought back the remembrance of the victory by which it was accelerated, and the Flemish pride, like a vain mother, exulted in the country's noble son who filled all Europe with admiration. Nine children who bloomed under the eyes of their fellow citizens, multiplied and drew closer the ties between him and his fatherland, and the general affection for him was kept up by the sight of those who were dearest to him. Every public appearance of Egmont was a triumphal procession; every eye, which was fastened upon him, recounted his life; his deeds lived in the plaudits of his companions in arms; mothers pointed him out to their children at the chivalrous games. Affability, a noble demeanour and courtesy,

the amiable virtues of chivalry, adorned and graced his merit. His free soul shone forth on his open brow; his frankheartedness managed his secrets no better than his benevolence did his estate, and a thought was no sooner his, than it was the property of all. His religion was gentle and humane, but little refined, because it derived its light from his heart and not from his understanding. Egmont possessed more conscience than fixed principles; his head had not given him his code, but had merely learnt it; the mere name of an action, therefore, could make that action to him a prohibited one. His men were wholly bad or good, and had either nothing bad or nothing good; in his ethics there existed no middleground between vice and virtue; therefore, a single good trait often decided him for a man. Egmont united all the eminent qualities which form the hero; he was a better soldier than the Prince of Orange, but as a Statesman far inferior to him; the latter saw the world as it really was; Egmont viewed it in the magic mirror of an embellishing fantasy. Men, whom fortune has surprised with a reward, for which they find no natural ground in their actions, are very easily tempted to forget, for the most part, the necessary connection between cause and effect, and to insert in the natural consequences of things, that higher miraculous power to which they at last insanely trust, as Caesar did to his fortune. Of these men was Egmont. Intoxicated with his own merits, which gratitude to him had exag-

gerated, he staggered on in this sweet revery, as in a delightful world of dreams. He feared not, because he trusted to the insecure pledge, which destiny had given him in the general love, and he believed in justice, because he was happy. Even the most terrible experience of Spanish perjury could not afterwards eradicate this confidence from his soul, and, on the scaffold itself, his latest feeling was hope. A tender fear for his family kept his patriotic courage chained by lesser duties. Because he had to tremble for property and life, he could not venture much for the republic. William of Orange broke with the throne, because its arbitrary power offended his pride; Egmont was vain, he, therefore, placed value on the favour of the monarch. The former was a citizen of the world; Egmont had never been more than a Fleming.

Philip the 2nd still stood in the debt of the victor at St. Quentin, and the supreme Stattholdership of the Netherlands appeared the only suitable recompense for such conspicuous service. Birth and high station, the voice of the nation and personal capacity, spoke as loudly for Egmont as for Orange, and if the latter could be vanquished, it seemed that the former alone could supplant him.

Two competitors of such equal merit might have embarrassed Philip in his choice, if it had ever entered his mind to decide for either of the two. But those pre-eminent qualities, by which they supported their claim to this office, were the very

cause of their exclusion; and it was precisely through the ardent desire of the nation for their exaltation, that they had, irrevocably, forfeited their claims to the appointment. Philip's purpose would not be answered by a Stattholder in the Netherlands, who commanded the good will and the strength of the people. Egmont's descent from the Duke of Gueldres made him an hereditary foe of the house of Spain, and the supreme power appeared dangerous in the hands of a man, to whom the idea might suggest itself of revenging on the son of the oppressor, the oppression which his ancestor underwent. The slight of their favourites could offend neither the nation nor themselves, for the King, it would be said, passed over both, because he would not shew a preference to either. The disappointment of his expectations of the Regency did not entirely deprive the prince of Orange of the hope of establishing, more firmly, his influence in the Netherlands. Among the others, who were proposed for this office, was also Christina, Dutchess of Lorraine and aunt of the King, who, as mediatrix of the peace of Chateau Cambresis, had acquired conspicuous merit with the crown. William aimed at the hand of her daughter, which design he hoped to promote by an active intercession for the mother; but he did not reflect that, through this very intercession, he ruined her cause. The Dutchess Christina was rejected, not so much, as it was said, because the dependence of her territories on France made

her an object of suspicion to the Spanish Court, as, far more, because she was acceptable to the people of the Netherlands and the Prince of Orange.



MARGARET OF PARMA, **REGENT OF THE NETHERLANDS.**

While the general expectation was on the stretch as to who would have the future controul of the destiny of the Provinces, there appeared on the frontiers of the country the Dutchess Margaret of Parma, sent for by the King from remote Italy, to govern the Netherlands. Margaret was a natural daughter of Charles the 5th, born of a young Netherlandish lady, named Vangeestin, 1522. To spare the honor of her house, she was at first educated in obscurity; but her mother, who possessed more vanity than honor, was not very anxious to preserve the secret of her origin, and a royal education betrayed the daughter of the Emperor. While yet a child, she was entrusted to the Regent Margaret, her great aunt, at Brussels, to be there brought up; this guardian she lost in her eighth year, receiving in exchange her successor, the Queen Mary of Hungary, a sister of the Emperor. Her father had already affianced her, while yet in her fourth year, to a Prince of Ferrara; but this alliance being in the sequel dissolved, she was engaged as spouse

to Alexander of Medicis, the new Duke of Florence, which marriage was, after the victorious return of the Emperor from Africa, actually consummated in Naples. In the first year of this unfortunate union, a violent death removed from her a husband who could not love her, and for the third time her hand was made to serve the policy of her father. Octavius Farnese, a Prince of thirteen years of age, and nephew of Paul the 3^d, obtained, with her person, the Dutchies of Parma and Piacenza as dowry, and Margaret was thus, by a strange destiny, united to a boy when, herself, of mature age, as she had, before, been, as a child, negociated away to a man. Her disposition, which had little of what is feminine in it, made this last alliance still more unnatural, for her inclinations were masculine, and the whole procedure of her life belied her sex. After the example of her instructress, the Queen of Hungary, and her great aunt, the Dutchess Mary of Burgundy, who met with her death in this favourite sport, she was passionately fond of hunting, and had thereby rendered her body so robust, that she could endure all the fatigues of this pursuit, like a man.

Her gait, itself, shewed so little grace, that one was far more tempted to take her for a disguised man, than for a masculine woman, and nature, whom she had derided by thus trespassing beyond the limits of her sex, revenged herself finally upon her by a disease peculiar to men, the Gout.

These unusual qualities were crowned by a

rooted monkish belief, which Ignatius Loyala, her confessor and teacher, had the credit of implanting in her mind. Among the charitable works and penances, with which she crucified her vanity one of the most remarkable was that, in the week before easter, in every year, she washed, with her own hands, the feet of a certain number of poor men (who were most strictly forbidden to clean themselves before hand), waited on them at table like a servant, and sent them away with rich presents. It needs not much more than this last feature in her character, to comprehend the preference, which the King gave her over all her rivals; but his predilection for her was at the same time justified on the best grounds of state policy. Margaret was born in the Netherlands and also educated there. She had spent her early youth among this people, and had acquired much of their manners. Two regents, (Dutchess Margaret and Queen Mary of Hungary), under whose eyes she had grown up, had gradually initiated her into the maxims, according to which this peculiar people is best governed, and might serve her as models. She did not want in intellect and a particular turn for business which she had acquired from her instructresses, and had, afterwards, brought to greater perfection in the Italian school. The Netherlands had been, for a number of years, accustomed to female government, and Philip hoped, perhaps, that the sharp iron of tyranny, which he was about to use against them,

would cut more gently, in the hands of a woman. Some regard for his father, who at that time was still living, and was much attached to Margaret, may, as it is asserted, have, in a measure, conduced to this choice, as it also probable that the King wished to oblige the Duke of Parma through this mark of attention to his wife, and thus compensate for denying him a request, which he was just then compelled to refuse him. As the territories of the Dutchess were surrounded by Philip's Italian states and, at all times, exposed to his arms, he could, therefore, with the less danger, entrust the supreme power into her hands. For his full security her son, too, Alexander Farnese, remained as a pledge for her loyalty at his Court. All these reasons together had sufficient weight to make the King decide for her; but that which made them conclusive, was that the Bishop of Arras and the Duke of Alba supported her. The latter, as it appears, because he hated or envied all the other competitors; the former, because his ambition, probably, already at that time, anticipated the great gratification which lay in store for it in the wavering disposition of this princess.

Philip received the new Regent on the frontiers, with a splendid cortege, and conducted her with magnificent pomp to Ghent, where the States general had been convoked. As he did not intend to return soon to the Netherlands, he desired, for once, before he entirely left them, to gratify the nation by holding a solemn Diet, and thus giving to the

regulations, which he had made, a greater sanction and the force of laws. For the last time, he shewed himself to his Netherlandish people, who, from henceforth, were to have their destiny awarded to them from a mysterious distance. To exalt the splendor of this solemn day, Philip created eleven new knights of the Golden Fleece, seated his sister on a chair near himself, and shewed her to the nation as their future Ruler. All the grievances of the people, as regarded the religious Edicts, the Inquisition, the detention of the Spanish troops, the taxes imposed, and the illegal introduction of foreigners into the offices of their country, came in this Diet under consideration and were hotly discussed by both parties; some were skillfully evaded or apparently remedied, others arbitrarily repelled. As the King was a stranger to the language of the country, he addressed the nation through the mouth of the Bishop of Arras, recounted to them with vainglorious ostentation all the benefits of his government, assured them of his favour for the future, and once more recommended to the States, in the most earnest manner, the preservation of the Catholic faith, and the extirpation of heresy. The Spanish troops, he promised, should in a few months vacate the Netherlands, if they were only willing to allow him time to recover himself from the numerous expenses of the last war, in order that he might be enabled to pay these troops their arrears. The laws of the country should remain unassailed, the imposts

should not oppress them beyond their powers, and the Inquisition should administer its duties with justice and moderation. In the choice of a supreme Stattholder, he added, he had especially consulted the wishes of the nation, and had decided for a native of the country, who had been initiated into their manners and customs, and was attached to them through love for her native land. He exhorted them, therefore, to honor his choice through their gratitude and to obey his sister, the Dutchess, as himself. Should, he concluded, unexpected obstacles oppose his return, he promised to send them, in his place, his son Prince Charles, who should reside in Brussels.

A few members of this assembly, more courageous than the rest, ventured one more last effort for Liberty of Conscience. Every people, they stated, must be treated according to their natural character, as must every individual man according to his bodily constitution. Thus, for example, the South may be considered happy under a certain degree of constraint, which would press intolerably on the North. Never, they added, would the Flemings consent to a yoke under which, perhaps, the Spaniards bowed with patience, and rather would they undergo any extremity, if it was sought to force that yoke upon them. Some counsellors of the King also supported this representation, and warmly urged a mitigation of those terrible religious edicts. But Philip remained inexorable. Better not reign, was his answer, than over heretics!

According to an arrangement, which Charles the 5th had already made, three Councils or Chambers were added to the Regent, and shared in the administration of State affairs. So long as Philip was himself present in the Netherlands, these courts had lost much of their power, and the functions of the first of them, the State Council, were nearly entirely suspended. Now, that he gave back out of his hands the hilt of the government, they recovered their former lustre. In the State Council, which watched over war and peace and external security, sat the Bishop of Arras, the Prince of Orange, the Count of Egmont, the President of the Privy Council, Viglius of Zuichem of Aytta, and the Count of Barlaumont, President of the Chamber of Finance. All Knights of the golden Fleece, all Privy Counsellors and Finance Counsellors, as also all Privy members of the Great Senate at Malines, which had been already subjected by Charles the 5th to the Privy Council in Brussels, had a seat and vote in the Council of State, if the Regent expressly invited them thereto. The management of the royal receipts and crownlands belonged to the Chamber of Finance, and the Privy Council employed itself with the administration of justice and the civil regulation of the country, and issued the letters of grace and immunity. The governments of the Provinces, which had fallen vacant, were filled up afresh, or the former governors were confirmed. The Count of Egmont received

Flanders and Artois; the Prince of Orange, Holland, Zealand, Utrecht and West-Friesland; the Count of Aremberg, East-Friesland, Oberyssel and Gröningen; the Count of Mansfeld, Luxemburg; Barlaimont, Namur; the Marquis of Bergen, Hainault, Chateau Cambresis and Valenciennes; the Baron of Montigny, Tournay and its other dependencies. Other provinces were given to others, who have less claim to our attention. Philip of Montmorency, Count of Hoorn, who had been succeeded by the Count of Mezen in the Government of Gueldres and Zutphen, was confirmed as Admiral of the Netherlandish naval force. Every governor of a province was, at the same time, a Knight of the Fleece and member of the Council of State. Each had, in the Province over which he presided, the command of the military force which protected it, the superintendence of the civil administration and judicature; Flanders alone excepted, where the governor had nought to say in matters of justice. Only Brabant was placed directly under the Regent, who, according to custom, chose Brussels as her constant residence. The induction of the Prince of Orange into his governments was, properly, a case against the Constitution of the country, since he was a foreigner; but some scattered estates, which he either himself possessed in the Provinces, or managed as the guardian of his son, a long sojourn in the country and, above all, the unlimited confidence of the nation in his intentions, made up

in real claim, what he wanted in a fortuitous circumstance.

The national force of the Netherlanders which, if complete, should consist of three thousand horse, but now did not much exceed two thousand, was divided into fourteen squadrons, over which, besides the Governors of the provinces, the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Hoogstraten, Bossu, Roeur and Brederode held the chief command. This cavalry, which was scattered through all the 17 Provinces, was to be ready only for sudden emergencies; little as it sufficed for great undertakings, it was, nevertheless, sufficient for the maintenance of the internal quiet of the country. Its courage was approved, and former wars had diffused the fame of its valour through the whole of Europe. Infantry, also, was to have been raised in addition to this, to which, however, the States, up to this time, would not consent. Of foreign troops there were still some German regiments in the service, which waited for their pay. The 4000 Spaniards, respecting whom so many complaints had been made, were under two Spanish leaders, Mendoza and Romero, and were in garrison in the frontier towns.

Among the Netherlandish nobles, whom the King especially distinguished in this distribution of appointments, stand the names of the Count of Egmont and William of Orange. Deeply as, even at that time, his hatred to both, and particularly the latter, had taken root, Philip, nevertheless,

gave them these public marks of his favour, because his vengeance was not yet ripe, and the people were enthusiastic in their devotion to them. The estates of both were declared exempt from taxes, the most lucrative governments were entrusted to their care; by offering them the command over the Spaniards, left behind in the country, the King flattered them with a confidence, which he was very far from really reposing in them. But at the very time, when he obliged the Prince with these public marks of esteem, he knew how to wound him so much the more sensibly in secret. From fear that an alliance with the powerful house of Lorraine might seduce this suspected vassal to bolder resolves, he thwarted the marriage, which was about to be agreed upon between him and a Princess of that family, and crushed his hopes on the eve of accomplishment; an injury which the Prince never forgave him. Philip's hatred to the Prince once even completely got the better of his natural dissimulation, and led him to a step, in which we entirely lose sight of Philip the 2^d. When he was about to embark at Flushing, and the nobles of the country attended him to the shore, he forgot himself so far as to accost the Prince roughly, and openly accuse him as the origin of the Flemish troubles. The Prince answered temperately, that nothing had happened which the States had not done out of their own suggestion and on the most legitimate grounds. No, said Philip, while he seized his hand and

shook it violently, not the States but You! You! You! The Prince stood mute with astonishment and, without waiting for the King's embarkation, wished him a safe journey and went back to the town. Thus the enmity, which William had long harboured in his breast against the oppressor of a free people, was finally rendered irreconcilable by private hatred and this double incentive brought at last the great undertaking to maturity, which wrested from the Spanish Crown seven of its most precious jewels. Philip had deviated not a tittle from his true character in taking leave of the Netherlands so graciously. The legal form of a Diet, his compliance in removing the Spaniards from the frontiers, the obligingness with which he filled the most important offices of the country with the favourites of the people, and, finally, the sacrifice which he made to the constitution when he withdrew the Count of Feria from the Council of State, were marks of attention, of which his magnanimity was in the sequel never again guilty. But he required now, more than ever, the good will of the States, in order, if possible, with their aid, to clear off the great burthen of debt which was still attached to the Netherlands from the former wars. Therefore, by propitiating them through smaller sacrifices, he hoped he might, perhaps, win from them an approval of his important usurpations. He marked his departure with grace, for he knew in what hands he left them. The frightful scenes of death which he intended for this

unhappy people were not to stain the splendour of Majesty, which, like the Godhead, marks its course only with beneficence; that terrible distinction was destined for his representatives. There was, however, by the establishment of the Council of State, more flattery shewn to the Netherlandish nobility, than real influence imparted to them. The historian Strada (who drew his information of every thing, which related to the Regent, from her own papers) has preserved for us a few articles of the secret instructions, which the Spanish ministry gave her. If she observed, it is there amongst other things stated, that the Councils were divided by factions, or, what would be far worse, prepared by private conferences before the Session and in league with one another, she should prorogue all the Chambers and dispose arbitrarily of the disputed articles in a more confined committee. In this select Committee, which was called the Consulta, sate the Bishop of Arras, the President Viglius, and the Count of Barlaimont. She was to act in the same manner if emergent cases required a more prompt decision. Had this arrangement not been the work of an arbitrary despotism, it would perhaps have been justified by sound policy, and republican liberty itself might have tolerated it. In great assemblies, where many private interests and passions cooperate, where the multitude of the hearers presents too splendid an opening to the vanity and ambition of the orator, and parties often assail one another

with unmannerly warmth, a decree can seldom be passed with that sobriety and mature deliberation as may, however, well happen in a more confined circle, if the members are properly selected. Not to mention that, in a numerous body of men there are to be supposed a greater number of limited than enlightened intellects who, through their equal right of vote, not rarely turn the majority on the side of ignorance. A second maxim which the Regent was to bring into action was this; to particularly compel those very members of Council, who had voted against a decree, to promote its execution, when it was carried, with the same willingness, as if they had been its most zealous supporters. By this means not only would the people be kept in ignorance of the originators of such a law, but the private quarrels also of the members would be restrained and a greater freedom encouraged in the giving of votes.

In spite of all these precautions, Philip never would have been able to leave the Netherlands tranquilly, so long as he knew the chief power in the Council of State and the obedience of the provinces in the hands of the suspected nobles; in order, therefore, to appease his fears from this quarter also and, at the same time, to assure himself of the Regent, he subjected her, herself, and in her all the affairs of the judicature, to the higher control of the Bishop of Arras; in which single man he gave an adequate counterpoise to the most dreaded cabal. To this person was the

Dutchess referred as to an infallible oracle of Majesty, and in him watched a stern supervisor of her administration. Among all contemporaneous mortals, Granvella was the only exception which the distrust of Philip the 2nd appears to have made; as long as he knew that this man was in Brussels, he could sleep in Segovia. He left the Netherlands in September of the year 1559, was saved from a storm which sank his fleet, and landed at Laredo in Biscay, and his gloomy joy thanked the preserving Deity by a detestable vow. In the hands of a priest and of a woman was placed the dangerous helm of the Netherlands, and the dastardly Tyrant escaped in his oratory at Madrid the supplications, the complaints and the curses of his people.

SECOND BOOK.

CARDINAL GRANVELLA.

Anthony Perenot, Bishop of Arras, subsequently Archbishop of Malines and Metropolitan of all the Netherlands, whom the hatred of his contemporaries has immortalized under the name of Cardinal Granvella, was born in the year 1516 at Besançon in the County of Burgundy. His father, Nicolaus Perenot, the son of a blacksmith, had raised himself, through his own merits, to be the private secretary of the Dutchess Margaret of Savoy, at that time Regent of the Netherlands; here he became known as a man of business to Charles the 5th, who took him into his service and employed him in the most important negociations. During 20 years he laboured in the cabinet of the Emperor, filled the offices of his privy counsellor and keeper of his seal, shared in all the state secrets of that monarch, and acquired a large fortune. Anthony Perenot, his son, inherited his honors, his influence and his political knowledge, and, already in his early years, gave proofs of the great capacity, which subsequently opened to him so glorious a career. Anthony had cultivated at several

Colleges the talents, with which nature had so lavishly endowed him, and both gave him an advantage over his father. He soon shewed that he could, by his own strength, maintain himself in the position, in which the merits of another had placed him. He was 24 years old, when the Emperor sent him as his Plenipotentiary to the ecclesiastical council at Trent, where he delivered the first specimen of that eloquence, which in the sequel gave him such an ascendancy over two Kings. Charles further employed him in several difficult embassies, which he accomplished to the fullest satisfaction of his monarch, and when finally, that emperor transferred the scepter to his son, he made that costly present perfect by giving him a minister, who helped him to wield it. Granvella opened his new career at once with the greatest masterpiece of his political genius, in passing so easily from the favour of such a father into the regards of such a son. He soon succeeded in actually deserving the same. At the secret negotiations, of which the Dutchess of Lorraine had, in 1558, been the medium, between the French and Spanish ministers at Peronne, he planned, conjointly with the Cardinal of Lorraine, the conspiracy against the Protestants, which was afterwards matured at Chateau Cambresis, where he, likewise, assisted in bringing about the peace so called, but at which very place also it was betrayed.

A deeply penetrating, comprehensive intellect,

an unusual facility in the conduct of great and intricate affairs, and the most extensive erudition were wonderfully united in this man, with the most enduring industry and never-wearying patience, and the most enterprising genius with the most thoughtful mechanical regularity. Day and night the state found him vigilant and collected; important and insignificant things were weighed by him with equally conscientious care. He not rarely employed five secretaries at the same time and in different languages, of which he is said to have spoken seven. That which a searching understanding had slowly matured, acquired vigour and grace in his mouth, and truth, attended by a powerful eloquence, irresistibly carried away all hearers. His integrity was incorruptible, because none of the passions, which make men dependent on men, tempted his mind. With admirable acuteness he saw through the disposition of his master, and often recognised in his features his whole train of thought, as it were the approaching form in the shadow which preceded it. With an art rich in resources, he came to the aid of Philip's more inactive mind, formed into perfect thought his crude ideas while they were yet on his lips, and liberally allowed him the glory of the discovery. Granvella understood the difficult and useful art of depreciating his own intellect, of making his own genius the slave of another; thus, he ruled while he concealed his sway, and only in this manner could

Philip the 2^d be governed. Content with a silent but thorough power, he did not grasp insatiably at new marks of it, which, in other cases, are ever the most coveted objects of lesser minds; but every new distinction became him as if it had never been separated from him. No wonder that such extraordinary endowments won for him the favour of his master; but an important legacy of political secrets and experiences, which Charles the 5th had accumulated in his active life and had deposited in the mind of this man, made him at the same time indispensable to his successor on the throne. Selfsufficiently as this latter was accustomed to confide in his own understanding, it was still necessary to his timid and crouching policy, to cling to a superior mind, and to aid its own irresolution through the weight, the example of another, and through precedent. No political event which concerned the royal family, so long as Philip was in the Netherlands, took place without Granvella's intervention, and when the King embarked for Spain, he made the new Regent as important a present in this minister, as he himself received in him from the Emperor, his father.

Commonly as we see despotic princes bestow their confidence on creatures, whom they have raised from the dust and whose creators they, in a measure, are, still preeminent were the qualities required to prevail so far over the selfish reserve of such a character as Philip's, as to gain his

confidence, nay, even to win him into familiarity. The slightest ebullition of the most allowable self-regard, through which he might have appeared to demand back his personal right in idea, which the King had once ennobled as his own, would have cost the minister his whole influence. It was permitted to him to gratify the lowest passions of voluptuousness, of rapacity, and of revenge, but the only one which really animated him, the sweet consciousness of his own superiority and power, he was constrained carefully to conceal from the suspicious glance of the Despot. He voluntarily disclaimed all the eminent qualities, which were actually his own, in order to receive them a second time from the generosity of the King. His happiness could flow from no other source but this, no other person could have a claim upon his gratitude. The purple, which was sent to him from Rome, was not assumed by him until the royal permission reached him from Spain; while he laid it down on the steps of the throne, he appeared in a measure to receive it first from the hands of Majesty. Less a statesman than he, Duke Alba erected a trophy in Antwerp and inscribed his own name under the victory, which he had won as the instrument of the crown — but Alba carried with him to the grave the displeasure of his master. He had invaded with audacious hand the royal prerogative, in drawing, in his own person, at the fountain of immortality.

Three times, Granvella changed his master,

and three times he succeeded in rising to the highest favour. With the same facility, with which he had guided the settled pride of an autocrat and the sly egotism of a Despot, he knew how to manage the delicate vanity of a woman. His business with the Regent was for the most part, even when they were together in the same house, carried on through notes, a custom which is to be dated from the times of Augustus and Tiberius. When the Regent was in perplexity, these notes were exchanged between the minister and her, often from hour to hour. He probably chose this way in order to deceive the watchful jealousy of the nobility, who might, thereby, not fully perceive his influence over the Regent; perhaps he believed, too, that through this means he should make his advice to the latter more lasting, and shield himself, in case of need, from blame by this written testimony. But the vigilance of the nobles made this caution vain, and it was soon known in all the Provinces, that nothing was done without the minister. Granvella possessed all the qualities requisite for a perfect statesman for monarchies which approach to despotism, but absolutely none for republics which are governed by Kings. Educated between the throne and the confession-stool, he knew of no other connections between men, than rule and subjection, and the innate consciousness of his own superiority gave him a contempt for others. His policy wanted pliability, the only virtue which was here indis-

pensable to it. He was imperious and insolent, and armed with the royal authority the natural impetuosity of his disposition and the passions of his priestly order. He concealed his own ambition in the interests of the crown, and made the breach between the nation and the King incurable, because he then became indispensable to the latter. He revenged on the nobility his own low origin, and after the fashion of all those who have forced on their fortune by their own merits, he valued the advantages of birth below those, by which he had risen. The Protestants recognised in him their most implacable enemy; all the burthens, which oppressed the country, were laid to his charge, and all pressed the more insufferably, because they came from him. Nay, he was even accused of having brought back to severity the milder intentions, which the urgent importunity of the States had, at last, elicited from the monarch. The Netherlands execrated him as the most terrible foe of their liberties, and the first originator of all the misery, which subsequently came upon them.

1559. Philip had evidently left the Provinces prematurely. The new measures of the government were still too strange to the people, and could receive sanction and force from him alone; the new machines, which he brought into play, required to be set in motion by a dreaded and powerful hand, and to have their first movements in the commencement, watched and assured by usage. He now exposed his minister to all the

passions, which at once felt the fetters of the royal presence removed, and he delegated to the weak arm of a subject that, in which Majesty itself, with all its most powerful supports, might have failed.

The land, indeed, flourished, and a general prosperity appeared to testify the happiness resulting from the peace in which it had lately participated. The repose of its external appearance deceived the eye, but it was only specious, and in its silent lap burned the most dangerous discord. If Religion totters in a country, she totters not alone; audacity had commenced with things sacred, and ended with things profane. The successful attack upon the hierarchy had awakened a spirit of boldness and desire to assail authority generally, and to test laws as well as dogmas, duties as well as opinions. This fanatical boldness, which men had learned to practise in the affairs of eternity, might change its subject matter; this contempt for life and property could metamorphose timid citizens into foolhardy rebels. A female government of nearly forty years had given the nation room to assert their liberty; continual wars, which made the Netherlands their theatre, had introduced a certain license, and called the right of the stronger into the place of civil order. The provinces were filled with foreign adventurers and fugitives, all of them men, who were bound no longer by any ties of country, of family, or of property, and who brought over with them the seeds of rebellion from the unhappy countries of

their birth. The repeated spectacles of torture and of death had torn away the tender threads of morality, and had given an unnatural harshness to the character of the nation. Still, the rebellion would have crouched timorously and silently on the ground, if it had not found a support in the nobility, on which it raised itself to be formidable. Charles the 5th had spoiled the nobility of the Netherlands by making them the participators of his glory, by fostering their national pride through the partiality, which he shewed them above those of Castile, and by opening an arena to their ambition in every part of his empire. In the last war with France, they had really deserved this preference from his son; the advantages, which the King reaped from the peace of Chateau-Cambresis, had been, for the most part, the work of their valour, and they now sensibly missed the gratitude, on which they had so confidently reckoned. Added to this, by the separation of the empire of Germany from the Spanish monarchy and the less warlike spirit of the new government, their sphere of action was altogether contracted, and beyond their own country little remained for them to gain. Philip now appointed his Spaniards, where Charles the 5th had employed Netherlanders. All those passions, which the preceding government had raised in them and employed, they still carried with them in peace; and these unruly feelings, to which their legitimate object was wanting, found, unfortunately, another

in the grievances of their native country. They now reproduced from oblivion the claims which had been, for a long time, supplanted by new passions. By the last appointments the King had made nearly all dissatisfied; for those very persons even, who obtained offices, were not much more content than those who were entirely passed over, because they had calculated on better. William of Orange received four governments, not to reckon other smaller ones which, taken together, amounted in value to a fifth; but William had nourished hopes of Flanders and Brabant. He and Count Egmont forgot what really fell to their share and only remembered that the Regency had been lost to them. The majority of the nobility had plunged into debt, or had permitted themselves to be drawn into it by the Government. Now, that they were excluded from the prospect of recovering themselves again in lucrative offices, they saw themselves at once exposed to want, which pained them the more sensibly, the more the splendid style of living of the affluent citizens contrasted with it. In the extremity to which they were reduced, many of them would have readily assisted in the commission even of crimes; how were they then to resist the seductive offers of the Calvinists, who repaid their intercession and protection with large sums. Many, in fine, who were past remedy, found their last refuge in the general devastation, and stood each moment prepared to cast the firebrand into the Republic.

This perilous state of feeling was, rendered still worse by the unfortunate vicinity of France. That which Philip had to dread for the provinces, was there already accomplished. In the fate of that Kingdom he could read the destiny of his Netherlands prefiguratively announced to him, and the spirit of rebellion could there find a seductive example. Similar coincidences had, under Francis the 1st and Henry the 2nd, scattered the seeds of innovation in that Kingdom; a similar fury of persecution and a like spirit of faction had encouraged its growth. Now, Huguenots and Catholics were struggling in a like dubious contest, furious parties disorganised the whole monarchy, and violently impelled this powerful state to the brink of destruction. Here, as there, private interest, ambition and party feeling might veil themselves under religion and patriotism, and the passions of a few citizens arm the entire nation. The frontiers of both countries merged in Walloon Flanders; the rebellion might, like an agitated sea, cast its waves as far as this — would a country be closed against it, whose language, manners and character wavered between those of France and Belgium? As yet, the government had held no muster of its Protestant subjects in these countries, but the new sect, she was aware, was a vast self-united Republic, which extended its roots through all the Monarchies of Christendom, and felt omnipresently the slightest disturbance in any of its parts, like threatening volcanoes, which, united through sub-

terraneous passages, ignite at the same moment in alarming sympathy. The Netherlands were, necessarily, open to all nations, because they derived their support from all nations. Was it possible for Philip to close a commercial state as easily as he could Spain? If he wished to purify these provinces from heresy, it was necessary for him to commence by extirpating it in France.

It was thus that Granvella found the Netherlands in the beginning of his administration (1560).

To restore the uniformity of papistry in these countries, to break the co-ruling power of the nobility and the States, and to exalt the royal authority on the ruins of republican freedom, was the great business of Spanish policy and the commission of the new Minister. But obstacles stood in the way of this undertaking, to conquer which, demanded the invention of new resources, the setting in motion of new machines. The Inquisition, indeed, and the religious edicts appeared sufficient to prevent the infection of heresy; but the latter required superintendence and the former sufficient instruments for its extended jurisdiction. The church constitution continued the same as it existed in the early times, when the provinces were less populous, when the church still enjoyed universal repose, and could be more easily superintended. A succession of several centuries, which changed the whole interior form of the provinces, had left this form of the hierarchy unaltered, which, moreover,

was protected from the arbitrary will of its ruler by the particular privileges of the provinces. All the 17 provinces were parcelled out under four Bishops, who had their seats at Arras, Tournay, Cambray and Utrecht and were subjected to the primates of Rheims and Cologne. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, had, indeed, already, with reference to the increasing population of these countries, meditated an enlargement of the hierarchy, but had, however, abandoned this project again in the excitement of a life of pleasure. Ambition and lust of conquest withdrew Charles the Bold from the internal concerns of his Kingdom, and Maximilian had already too many disputes with the States to venture on this one also. A stormy reign prevented Charles the 5th from the execution of this extensive plan, which Philip the 2^d now undertook as a bequest from all these princes. The moment had now appeared when the urgent necessities of the church could excuse this innovation, and the leisure of peace favoured its accomplishment. With the prodigious crowd of people, who were pressed together from all the countries of Europe in the towns of the Netherlands, a confusion of religions and opinions had arisen, which it was impossible could any longer be superintended by so few eyes. While the number of the Bishops was so small, their districts must, of necessity, have too great an extent, and four men could not be adequate for the purification of the faith through so wide a ter-

ritory. The jurisdiction, which the Archbishops of Cologne and Rheims exercised in the Netherlands, had long since been a stumbling block to the government, which could not yet look on this territory as its own property, so long as the most important branch of power was still in foreign hands. To snatch this from them, to stimulate the religious examinations through new and active agents, and, at the same time, to strengthen the number of the partizans of Government at the Diet, no better means were to be found, than to increase the number of Bishops. With this resolve Philip the 2^d ascended the throne; but a change in the hierarchy would necessarily meet with the warmest opposition from the States, without whom, nevertheless, it could not be attempted. Philip foresaw that the nobility would never approve of an institution by which the royal party gained so strong an augmentation, and the preponderance of power in the Diet would be taken from the aristocracy. The revenues, from which these new Bishops were to live, must be torn from the Abbots and monks, and these formed a considerable part of the states of the realm. Not to reckon that he had to fear all the Protestants, who would not fail to act secretly in the Diet against him. The whole affair was carried on in Rome in the most secret way. Francis Sonnoi, a priest of the town of Louvain, Granvella's instructed agent, stepped before Paul the 4th and informed him how extensive the Provinces were, how thriv-

ing and populous, how luxurious in their prosperity. But, he continued, in the immoderate enjoyment of liberty the true faith is neglected and heretics prosper. To obviate this evil, the Romish See must do something out of the common way. It is not difficult to prevail on the Romish Pontiff to make an alteration which enlarges the sphere of his own jurisdiction.

Paul the 4th appointed a tribunal of seven Cardinals who were to consult concerning this important matter; the affair, from which death called him away, was perfected by his successor, Pius the 4th. The welcome tidings reached the King, while still in Zealand, before he set sail for Spain, and the Minister was secretly charged with the dangerous reform. The new hierarchy was published in 1560; in addition to the then existing four Bishoprics, thirteen new ones were established, according to the number of 17 provinces, and four of them were raised into archbishoprics. Six such episcopal seats, viz. in Antwerp, Herzogenbusch, Ghent, Bruges, Ypres and Ruremonde, were placed under the archbishopric of Malines; five others, Haarlem, Middelburg, Leuwarden, Deventer and Groningen under the archbishopric of Utrecht; and the remaining four, Arras, Tournay, St. Omer and Namur, which lie nearest to France and have language, character and manners in common with that country, under the archbishopric of Cambray. Malines, situated in the middle of Brabant and of all the 17 provinces, was made the primacy of all

of the Province, whose States they composed. Free, patriotic citizens now became instruments of the Romish See, and obedient machines of the Archbishop, who had, moreover, again the particular command over them as first Prelate of Brabant. The freedom of voting was gone, because the Bishops, as servile spies of the crown, made themselves formidable to every one. Who, it was said, will hereafter venture to raise his voice in Parliament before such observers, or dare protect the rights of the nation in their presence against the robber grasp of the government? They will trace out the resources of the Provinces and betray to the crown the secrets of our freedom and our property. They will obstruct the way to all offices of honor; we shall soon see the courtiers of the King succeed them; the children of foreigners will, for the future, fill the Parliament, and the private interest of their patron will guide their purchased voices. "What an act of oppression," continued the monks, "to pervert the devout object of these holy institutions, to condemn the inviolable will of the dying, and to make that, which pious charity had deposited in these archives for the unfortunate, subservient to the luxury of the Bishops and dignify their proud pomp with the plunder of the poor? — Not only the Abbots and Monks, who really had the misfortune to suffer through this deduction, but all the families who, down to the most distant generations, could flatter themselves with any appearance of hope, at some time

or other to enjoy the same benefit, received this disappointment, as if they had suffered an actual injury, and the pain of a few Prelates became the concern of whole races. Historians have drawn our attention to the covert proceedings of William of Orange during this general commotion, who laboured to conduct to one end these conflicting passions. At his instigation it was, that the people of Brabant petitioned the Regent for an Advocate and Protector, since they alone, of the Netherlandish subjects, had the misfortune to unite, in one and the same person, their counsel and their ruler. Their choice could fall on no other than the Prince of Orange. But Granvella broke through this snare by his presence of mind. "The man who receives this office," he declared in the State council, "will, I hope, see, that he divides Brabant with the King!" The long delay of the papal diploma, which a misunderstanding between the Romish and Spanish courts, retarded in Rome, gave the disaffected an opportunity to combine for one object. In perfect secrecy, the States of Brabant despatched an extraordinary messenger to Pius the 4th, to urge their request in Rome itself. The ambassador was provided with important letters of recommendation from the Prince of Orange, and carried with him considerable sums to pave himself a way to the father of the church. At the same time there went from the town of Antwerp a public letter to the King of Spain, wherein the most urgent representations were

made to him to spare that flourishing commercial town from this innovation. They knew, it was therein stated, that the intentions of the monarch were the best, and that the induction of the new Bishops was highly conducive to the maintenance of the true religion; but the foreigners could not be convinced of this, on whom, however, the prosperity of their town depended. Here, the most groundless rumours would be as perilous as the most true. The first embassy was detected in sufficient time, and frustrated by the Regent; by the second, the town of Antwerp gained its point so far that, until the personal arrival of the King, which was talked of, it should remain without its Bishop. The example and success of Antwerp gave the signal for opposition to all the other towns for which a Bishop was intended. It is a remarkable proof how far, at that time, the hatred to the Inquisition and the unanimity of the Netherlandish towns went, that they would rather renounce all the advantages, which the residence of a Bishop must necessarily diffuse through their interior trade, than promote, by their consent, that abhorred tribunal, and act against the interests of the whole nation. Deventer, Ruremond and Leuwarden placed themselves in determined opposition, and (1561) successfully carried their point; in the other towns the Bishops were, in spite of all remonstrances, forcibly inducted. Utrecht, Haarlem, St. Omer and Middelburg were among the first, which opened their gates to

them; the remainig towns followed their example; but in Malines and Herzogenbusch, the Bishops were received with very little respect. When Granvella held his solemn entry into the former town, not a single nobleman shewed himself, and his triumph was wanting in every thing, because those remained away over whom it was held.

In the mean time, too, the appointed period had elapsed, when the Spanish troops were to have left the country, and, as yet, there was no appearance of their being withdrawn. People perceived with terror the real cause of this delay, and suspicion gave it a fatal connection with the Inquisition. The longer detention of these troops made all the other innovations more difficult for the minister, because it rendered the nation vigilant and distrustful, and, yet, he would fain not have deprived himself of this powerful aid, which appeared to him indispensable in a country, where all hated him, and in the performance of a commission, which all opposed. Finally, however, the Regent saw herself compelled by the universal murmur, to press earnestly on the King the withdrawal of these troops. „The Provinces,“ she writes to Madrid, „have unanimously declared, that they will never be compelled to grant to the Government the required extraordinary taxes, as long as faith is not kept with them in this matter. The danger of an insurrection is far more imminent, than that of a surprise from the French Protestants, and if a revolt took place in the

Netherlands, these troops would still be too weak to check it, and there was not sufficient money in the treasury to enlist new." The King still sought, by delaying his answer, to gain time at least, and the reiterated representations of the Regent would still have remained ineffectual, if, fortunately for the provinces, a loss, which he had lately suffered from the Turks, had not compelled him to employ these troops in the Mediterranean. He, therefore, at last consented to their departure; they were embarked 1561 in Zealand, and the exulting shouts of all the provinces accompanied them as they set sail: Meanwhile, Granvella ruled in the Council of State almost uncontrolled. All offices, secular and spiritual, were given away through him; his opinion prevailed against the unanimous voice of the whole assembly. The Regent herself was governed by him. He had known how to manage so, that her appointment was made out only for two years, through which artifice he kept her always in his power. It seldom happened that affairs of importance were submitted for deliberation to the other members, and if this did, at any time, occur, they were matters long before decided, to which, at most, only the useless form of their assent was required. If a royal letter was read to them, Viglius was commanded to omit those passages, which the minister had underlined for him. It often happened, for example, that this correspondence with Spain revealed the weakness of the State, or the fears of the Regent,

regarding which it was not desirable to inform the Members, whose loyalty was distrusted. If it happened that the opposition gained a majority over the Minister, and insisted with determination on an Article, which he could not well any longer put off, he sent it to the ministry at Madrid for decision, by which he, at least, gained time and was certain to find support. With the exception of the Count of Barlaimont, the President Viglius and a few others, all the remaining Consellers were mere superfluous figures in the senate, and the Minister's behaviour to them was directed according to the small value, which he placed upon their friendship and adherence. No wonder that men, whose pride had been indulged so extremely by the most flattering attentions of sovereign Princes, and to whom their fellow citizens offered the most reverential submission, as to the Gods of their country, received this arrogance of a plebeian with the deepest indignation. Granvella had personally insulted many among them. The Prince of Orange was not ignorant that he had prevented his marriage with the Princess of Lorraine, and had endeavoured to cause another alliance with the Princess of Savoy to be broken off. He had deprived the Count of Hoorn of the Government of Gueldres and Zutphen, and had kept for himself an abbey, which the Count of Egmont exerted himself to obtain for a relation. Sure of his superior power, he did not once think it worth his while to conceal from the nobi-

lity his contempt for them, which was the rule of his whole administration; William of Orange was the only one, whom he still deemed worthy of his dissimulation. Although he really believed himself removed beyond all the laws of fear and of decorum, here, however, his confident arrogance deceived him, and he erred no less against policy, than he was sinning against modesty. In the then posture of affairs, a worse rule than that of disregarding the nobility could hardly have been selected by the government. It had it in its power to flatter the feelings of the aristocracy, and thus artfully and imperceptibly win them to its plan, and, through them, cause the subversion of the national liberty. Now, it admonished them, most inopportunately, of their duties, their dignity and their power, compelled them even to be patriots and to turn to the side of true greatness an ambition, which it had inconsiderately repelled. To carry through the religious ordinances, it required the most active assistance of the lieutenant governors; no wonder, however, that these shewed but little zeal to afford the government this assistance. It is, rather, highly probable that they silently laboured to augment the difficulties of the minister and subvert his measures, and, through his ill success, to contradict the confidence of the king in him, and expose his administration to derision. The rapid progress, which the Reformation, in spite of those horrible edicts, had, during Granvella's administration, made in the Netherlands,

is evidently to be ascribed to the lukewarmness of the nobility. If he had been sure of the nobles, he might have despised the fury of the mob, which would have impotently broken itself on the dreaded barriers of the throne. The sufferings of the citizens lingered long in tears and sighs, until the arts and the example of the nobility called forth the expression of it.

Meanwhile, the religious examinations were carried on with renewed vigour by the crowd of new labourers (1561, 1562), and a fearful obedience was given to the Edicts against heretics. But this detestable remedy had survived the critical moment when it might have been applied; the nation had become too much ennobled for such rough treatment. The new religion could now no longer be extirpated but through the death of all its avowers. All these executions were now just so many alluring exhibitions of its excellence, so many stages of its triumph and of its radiant virtue. The heroic greatness, with which the victims died, made converts to the faith for which they perished. From one martyr arose ten new proselytes. Not in towns only, or villages, but in the highways too, in ships and in carriages disputes were held regarding the dignity of the Pope, the saints, purgatory and dispensation, sermons preached and men converted. From the country and from the towns, the common people rushed together to rescue the prisoners of the holy Tribunal from the hands of its satellites, and

the municipal officers, who ventured to maintain its dignity by force, were received with stones. Crowds accompanied the protestant preachers whom the Inquisition pursued, bore them on their shoulders to and from church, and, at the risk of their lives, concealed them from their persecutors. The first province, which was seized with the fanatical spirit of rebellion, was, as had been feared, Walloon Flanders. A French Calvinist, by name Lannoi, arose in Tournay as a worker of miracles, where he paid a few women to pretend diseases, and allow themselves to be cured by him. He preached in the woods near the town, drew the people in crowds after him, and scattered in their minds the sparks of revolt. The same happened in Lille and Valenciennes, in which latter town the municipal functionaries possessed themselves of the Apostles. While, however, they procrastinated regarding their execution, the party of the heretics increased to such a formidable number, that it was sufficiently strong, to break open the prisons and forcibly deprive justice of its victims. At last, the Government brought troops into the town, who restored quiet. But this trifling occurrence had, for a moment, withdrawn the veil from the secrecy, in which the Protestant party had lain till now concealed, and allowed the minister to compute their prodigious numbers. In Tournay alone, 5000 had been seen to appear at one such sermon, and not many less in Valenciennes. What might not be expected from the northern provinces, where

liberty was greater and the government more remote, and where the vicinity of Germany and Denmark augmented the sources of contagion? One signal was sufficient to draw from its concealment so formidable a multitude. How much greater was, perhaps, the number of those who, in their hearts, acknowledged the new sect, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to publish their avowal of it? This discovery alarmed the Regent in an extreme degree. The scanty obedience paid to the Edicts, the wants of the exhausted treasury, which compelled her to impose new taxes, and the suspicious movements of the Huguenots on the French frontiers, still farther increased her anxiety. At the same time she received a command from Madrid to send off two thousand Netherlandish cavalry to the army of the Queen Mother in France, who, in the distresses of the religious war, had taken refuge with Philip the 2nd. Every affair of faith, whatever land it concerned, was Philip's own business. He felt it as closely, as any thing that befell his own family, and in such case stood always prepared to sacrifice his property to the necessities of others. If it was self-interest which here swayed him, it was at least kingly and grand, and the bold support of these maxims wins back from our admiration, what their destructiveness had lost in our acquiescence. The Regent opened to the Council of State the royal will, and found the warmest opposition on the part of the nobility. The Count

of Egmont and the Prince of Orange declared the time very ill chosen, for stripping the Netherlands of troops, when every thing rather counselled the enlistment of new levies. The near movements of troops in France threatened every moment a surprise, and the internal ferment of the provinces required now, more than ever, the vigilance of the government. Hitherto, they said, the German protestants had idly looked on upon the struggles of their brethren in the faith; but will they continue to do so then too, when we strengthen the force of their enemy through our aid? Shall we not rouse their vengeance against us and call their arms into the northern Netherlands. Nearly the whole Council of State joined in this opinion, their representations were energetic and not to be gainsayed. The Regent herself, as well as the Minister, could not but feel their truth, and their own advantage appeared to them to forbid the execution of the royal mandate. Were they to withdraw from the Inquisition its sole prop by the removal of the larger portion of the army, and surrender themselves, without defence, in a rebellious country, to the arbitrary will of an arrogant aristocracy? While the Regent, divided between the royal commands, the urgent importunity of her council, and her own fears, did not venture to determine on any thing decisive, William of Orange rose and proposed the assembly of the States General. The royal dignity could suffer no more fatal blow, than by thus granting

to the nation a remembrance of their power and their rights, which could not but prove so seductive at the present moment. The danger, which was gathering over the minister, did not escape him; a sign from him warned the Regent to break off the consulation and adjourn the session. "The Government," he writes to Madrid, "can do nothing more injurious to itself, than by consenting to the assembling of the States. Such a step is at all times perilous, because it tempts the nation to test and restrict the rights of the crown; but it is three times more objectionable, now that the spirit of rebellion has already spread itself far around us; now that the abbots, exasperated at the loss of their income, will neglect nothing to impair the dignity of the bishops, when the whole nobility and all the representatives of the towns are led by the arts of the Prince of Orange, and the disaffected can securely reckon on the assistance of the nation. This representation, which at least did not want in solidity, could not fail in having the expected effect on the mind of the King. The assembling of the States was rejected once and for ever, the penal statutes against the heretics were renewed in all their severity, and the Regent was directed to hasten the despatch of the required reinforcement of troops. But the Council of State were not to be persuaded to this. All that she obtained was, instead of the subsidies, to send money to the Queen Mother, which, in the present crisis, was still more welcome to her. In order,

however, to beguile the nation with, at least, a shadow of republican freedom, the Regent summoned the governors of the provinces and the Knights of the Golden Fleece to a special congress at Brussels, to consult on the present dangers and necessities of the state. When the President Viglius had opened to them the subject of their meeting, three days were given to them for consideration. During this time, the Prince of Orange assembled them in his palace, where he represented to them the necessity of becoming unanimous before the session, and agreeing together on the measures which were to be followed in the present danger of the state.

Many agreed to this proposal, only Barlaimont with a few adherents of Cardinal Granvella, had the courage in this assembly to speak for the interests of the crown and of the minister. "It did not behove them," he said, "to interfere in the concerns of the government, and this previous agreement of votes was an illegal and culpable assumption, of which he would not make himself guilty;" — a declaration which terminated the whole meeting without result. The Regent, apprised of this occurrence through the Count Barlaimont, contrived to employ the knights during their sojourn in the town so artfully, that they could find no time for any further understanding; it was, however, agreed in this session, with their concurrence, that Florence of Montmorency, Lord of Motigny, should make a journey to

Spain, in order to acquaint the King with the present posture of affairs. But the Regent sent before him another secret messenger to Madrid, who previously informed the King of all that had been determined on between the Prince of Orange and the Knights, at the former conference.

The Flemish ambassador was flattered in Madrid with empty protestations of royal favour and paternal sentiments towards the Netherlands; the Regent was commanded to thwart, with all her power, the secret combinations of the nobility and, if possible, to sow discord among their most eminent members. Jealousy, private interest and religious differences had long divided many of the nobles; their common fortune, in the neglect with which they were treated, and hatred to the minister had again united them. So long as the Count of Egmont and the Prince of Orange were soliciting for the Regency, it could not fail but that they should, at times, clash with one another in the various ways, which each selected for the attainment of this object. Both had met each other on the road to glory and at the throne; both, again, met in the Republic, where they strove for the same prize, the favour of their fellow-citizens. Such opposite characters necessarily soon estranged themselves from each other, but the powerful sympathy of necessity as soon brought them together again. Each was now indispensable to the other, and exigency tied between these two men a bond, which their hearts would never have succeeded in

doing. But on this very uncongeniality of their dispositions the Regent based her plan; and if she was so fortunate as to separate them, she had, at the same time, divided the whole Netherlandish nobility into two parties. Through presents and small attentions, by which she exclusively honored these two, she sought to excite the envy and distrust of the rest against them; and while she appeared to give the Count of Egmont a preference above the Prince of Orange, she hoped to make the latter suspicious of Egmont's good faith. It happened that at this very time she was obliged to send an extraordinary ambassador to Francfort, to the election of a Roman Emperor; she chose for this office the Duke of Arschot, the most declared foe of the Prince, in order, in some degree, to give in him an example how splendidly hatred against the latter would be rewarded. The Orange faction, instead of suffering any diminution, had received an important addition in the Count of Hoorn, who, as admiral of the Netherlandish marine, had convoyed the King to Biscay, and now again took his seat in the Council of State. Hoorn's restless and republican spirit met the daring schemes of Orange and Egmont, and a dangerous Triumvirate was soon formed of these three friends, which shook the royal power in the Netherlands, but which did not have a like termination for all three (1562). Meanwhile, Montigny, also, was returned from his embassy and brought to the Council of State the gracious

sentiments of the monarch. But the Prince of Orange had, through his own secret channels, intelligence from Madrid, which entirely contradicted this information and deserved far more credit. By these means he learnt all the ill services, which Granvella did him and his friends with the King, and the odious appellations, which were there applied to the conduct of the Netherlandish nobility. There was no help so long as the minister was not removed from the helm of government, and this undertaking, however rash and adventurous it appeared, now wholly occupied the Prince. It was agreed between him and the two Counts of Hoorn and Egmont, to despatch a letter to the King in common and, in the name of the nobility, formally accuse the minister, and press energetically for his removal. The Duke of Arschot, to whom this proposition was communicated by the Count of Egmont, rejected it with the haughty declaration, that he was not disposed to receive laws from Egmont and Orange; that he had no cause of complaint against Granvella, and that, altogether, he thought it very presumptuous to prescribe to the King, what ministers he ought to employ. Orange received a similar answer from the Count of Aremberg. Either the seeds of distrust, which the Regent had scattered amongst the nobility, had already taken root, or the fear of the minister's power outweighed the abhorrence of his administration; suffice it to say, the whole nobility skunk back timidly and irresolutely from

the proposal. This baffled expectation did not deject their courage, the letter was nevertheless written and subscribed by all three (1563).

Granvella was therein represented as the prime originator of all the disorganisation in the Netherlands. So long as the highest power should be left in such culpable hands, it would be impossible for them, they declared, to serve the nation and the King effectually, all, on the other hand, would return to its former tranquility, all opposition be discontinued and the government again acquire the affection of the people, as soon as his Majesty would be pleased, to remove this man from the helm of the state. In that case, they added, neither influence nor zeal would fail them to maintain in these countries the dignity of the King and the purity of the faith, which was no less sacred to them, than to the Cardinal Granvella.

Secretly as this letter was despatched, still the Dutchess was informed of it in sufficient time, to weaken, by another despatch, which she with all speed sent before it, the effect, which it, contrary to all expectation, might have had on the King's mind. Some months passed ere an answer came from Madrid. It was mild, but vague. "The King," such was its import, "was not used to condemn his ministers unheard on the accusations of their enemies. Common justice, alone, required, that the accusers of the Cardinal should descend from general imputations to special proofs, and, if they

were not inclined to do this in writing, one of them might come to Spain, where he should be treated with all due respect. Besides this letter, which was equally directed to all three, the Count of Egmont farther received an autograph letter from the King, wherein was expressed the wish, to learn from him in particular, what in the former common letter had been only superficially touched upon. The Regent, also, was specially instructed, what she had to answer to all three collectively and to the Count in particular. The King knew his man. He knew how easy it was to manage the Count of Egmont, when one had to do with him alone; for this reason he sought to entice him to Madrid, where he would be removed from the guiding superintendence of a higher intellect. While he distinguished him above both his friends by this flattering mark of his confidence, he made the relation unequal, in which all three stood to the throne; how could they, then, unite with equal zeal for the same object, when their inducements thereto no longer remained the same? This time, indeed, the vigilance of Orange frustrated his plan; but the sequel of this history will show, that the seed, which was here scattered, was not entirely lost (1563).

The King's answer gave no satisfaction to the three confederates; they had the courage to venture yet a second attempt. "It had not a little surprised them," they wrote, "that his Majesty

had thought their representations worthy of so little attention. Not as accusers of the minister, but as counsellors of his Majesty, whose duty it was to inform their master of the condition of his States, had they despatched that letter to him. They sought not the ruin of the minister, indeed it would gratify them to see him contented and happy in any other part of the world, than here in the Netherlands. They were, however, most fully persuaded of this, that the general tranquillity could absolutely not consist with the presence of this man. The present dangerous condition of their native country would allow none of them to leave it, and, on account of Granvella, to make a long journey to Spain. If, therefore, his Majesty did not please to comply with their written request, they hoped for the future to be excused attendance in the senate, where they were only exposed to the mortification of meeting the Minister, and where they were of no service, either to the King or the state, but only appeared contemptible to themselves. In conclusion, they begged, his Majesty would approve the plain simplicity of their language, as persons of their character set more value on acting well, than on speaking finely." To the same purport was a separate letter from the Count of Egmont, in which he returned thanks for the royal autograph letter. This second address was followed by an answer to the effect that, "their representations would be taken into consideration, meanwhile they were

requested to attend the Council of State as heretofore."

It was evident that the monarch was far from granting their request; they, therefore, from this time forth, remained away from the State Council, and even left Brussels. They had not succeeded in removing the Minister by lawful means; they sought a new way of accomplishing this, from which more might be expected. On every opportunity they and their adherents openly showed for him the contempt, with which they felt themselves penetrated, and contrived to give a ridiculous appearance to every thing he undertook. By thus treating him with scorn, they hoped to torment the haughty spirit of the priest, and to gain, perhaps, from his mortified selflove, what they had been disappointed of by other means. This object, indeed, they did not arrive at, but the expedient on which they had fallen, led, in the end, to the ruin of the Minister. The voice of the people had raised itself more openly against him, so soon as they perceived that he had forfeited the good opinion of the nobility and that men, whose sentiments they had been used blindly to echo, preceded them in destestation for him. The contemptuous manner, in which the nobility treated him now, in a measure, devoted him to the general scorn and empowered calumny, which does not spare even what is holy, to lay hands on his honor. The new constitution of the church, which was the great grievance of the nation, had

been the basis of his fortunes — this was a crime that could not be forgiven. Every new spectacle of execution, with which the activity of the Inquisitors was only too liberal, maintained the abhorrence of him in fearful exercise, and, at last, custom and usage inscribed his name on every act of oppression. A stranger in a land, into which he had been forcibly introduced; alone among millions of enemies; uncertain of all his tools; supported only by the weak arm of distant royalty; united with the nation, which he had to gain, only through faithless organs, all of them men, whose highest object it was to falsify his actions; placed, finally, by the side of a woman, who was not able to share with him the burthen of the general execration — thus he stood exposed to the wantonness, the ingratitude, the faction, the envy and all the passions of a licentious, unbridled people. It is worthy of remark, that the hatred, which he had brought upon himself, far overstepped the demerits, which could be laid to his charge; that it was difficult, nay impossible, for his accusers to substantiate, by single proofs, the voice of condemnation, which fell upon him from all sides. Before and after him, fanaticism dragged its victims to the altar, before and after him civil blood flowed, the rights of men were made a mock of, and men themselves rendered wretched. Under Charles the 5th, thyrranny ought to have pained more acutely through its novelty — under the Duke of Alba it was carried to a far more

unnatural extent, in so much that Granvella's administration, in comparison with that of his successor, was even merciful, and yet we nowhere find that his contemporaries evinced the degree of personal exasperation and despise against the latter, in which they indulged against his predecessor. To cloak the meanness of his birth in the splendor of high dignities, and to snatch him, if possible, from the malice of his enemies through an exalted station, the Regent had contrived, through her interests in Rome, to invest him with the purple; but this very honor, which connected him more closely with the court of Rome, made him so much the more a stranger in the Provinces. The Purple was a new crime in Brussels and an obnoxious detested garb, which, in a measure, publicly exhibited the grounds on which he would act for the future. Not his honorable rank, which alone often hallows the most infamous caitiff, not his talents which commanded esteem, not even his terrible omnipotence itself, which was daily evinced by so many sanguinary proofs, could screen him from derision. Terror and scorn, the fearful and the ludicrous were, in his instance, unnaturally blended. *)

*) The nobility, at the suggestion of the Count of Egmont, caused their servants to wear a common livery, on which was embroidered a fool's cap. All Brussels interpreted it for the cardinal's hat and every appearance of such a servant renewed their laughter; this fool's cap was subsequently, because it was offensive to the Court, altered into a bundle of arrows —

Odious rumours branded his honor; murderous attempts on the lives of Egmont and Orange were ascribed to him; the most incredible things found credence; the most monstrous, if they referred to him, or emanated from him, surprised no longer. The nation had already become uncivilised to a degree, where the most contradictory sensations are produced, and the finer boundary lines of decorum and moral feeling are removed. — This belief in extraordinary crimes is almost always an infallible precursor of their near appearance. But even the strange destiny of this man brings with it at the same time something exalted, that imparts to the unprejudiced observer joy and admiration. Here, he beholds a nation, who, dazzled by no splendour, restrained by no fear, firmly, inexorably and unpremeditatedly unanimous, punished the crime, which had been committed against their dignity in the violent introduction of this stranger. Ever kept aloof and ever isolated, we behold him, like a foreign hostile body, suspended over the surface, which scorned to receive him. The strong hand itself of the monarch, who

an accidental jest which took a very serious ending, and probably gave origin to the arms of the Republic. Vit. Vigl. T. II. 35 Thuan. 489. The respect for the cardinal sunk at last so low, that a satirical engraving was publicly put into his hand, in which he was represented sitting on a heap of eggs, out of which Bishops were creeping. Over him hovered a devil with the inscription: This is my son, hear ye him! Hopper L. 1. 35.

was his friend and protector, could not support him against the will of the nation, which had once resolved to repel him from itself. Its voice is so formidable, that even private interest relinquishes its certain booty; that his charities are shunned, like the fruits of an accursed tree. Like an infectious breath, the infamy of universal reprobation adheres to him. Gratitude believes itself absolved from its duties towards him; his adherents shun him; his friends are dumb. So terribly did the people avenge their nobles and their insulted Majesty on the greatest monarch of the earth. History has repeated this memorable example only once, in Cardinal Mazarin; but it differed according to the spirit of the two periods and nations. The highest power could not protect either from derision; but France found vent in laughing over its Pantaloon, and the Netherlands passed through laughter to rebellion. The former saw itself, from a long condition of bondage, under the administration of Richelieu, placed, in a sudden and unwonted freedom; the latter passed, from a long and hereditary liberty into a servitude, to which they were unaccustomed; it was natural, that the Fronde should end again in subjection, and the Netherlandish troubles in republican liberty or insurrection. The revolt of the Parisians was the offspring of poverty; unbridled, but not bold, arrogant without energy, base and plebeian, like the source from which it sprang. The murmur of the Netherlands was the proud and powerful voice

of wealth. Licentiousness and hunger inspired the former; revenge, property, life and religion the latter. Mazarin's spring of action was rapacity; Granvella's, lust of power. The former was humane and mild; the latter harsh, imperious, cruel. The French Minister sought in the favour of his queen an asylum from the hatred of the Magnates and the fury of the people; the Netherlandish Minister provoked the hatred of a whole nation, in order to please one man. Against Mazarin were only factions, and the mob they armed; against Granvella, the nation. Under the former, Parliament attempted to obtain, by stealth, a power which did not belong to them; under the latter, it struggled for a lawful authority, which he insidiously endeavoured to annihilate. The former had to contend with the princes of the blood and the peers of the realm, as the latter had with the native nobility and the states, but instead of endeavouring, like the former, to overthrow their common enemy, only with the object that they themselves should step into his place, the latter wished to destroy the place itself, and to divide a power, which no single man ought to possess entire.

While this was taking place among the people, the Minister began to totter at the court of the Regent. The repeated complaints of his power must have, at last, given her to perceive how little belief was placed in her own; perhaps she feared that the universal abhorrence, which attached

to him, would include herself also, or that his longer stay would finally call forth the threatened insurrection. Long intercourse with him, his instruction and his example, had, at last, enabled her to govern without him. His dignity began to be oppressive to her as he became less necessary, and his faults, to which her friendship had till now lent a veil, became visible as it cooled. Now she was as much disposed to search out and enumerate these faults, as she formerly had been to conceal them. In this disadvantageous feeling towards the cardinal, the accumulated and pressing representations of the nobles began, at last, to find access to her, which happened the more easily, as they contrived, at the same time, to mix up her fears with them. „It was matter of great astonishment,“ said the Count of Egmont to her, amongst other things, „that the king, to gratify a man, who was not even a Netherlander, and of whom it was, therefore, known, that his happiness had no concern with the blessings of this country, could see all his Netherlandish subjects suffer — to please a foreigner, whose birth made him a subject of the Emperor, whose purple made him a creature of the court of Rome. To the king alone, added the count, was Granvella indebted that he was still among the living; for the future, however, he would leave that care to the Regent and he herewith gave her warning. While the majority of the nobles, disgusted with the contemptuous treatment, which they met with in the Council of

State, gradually withdrew from it, the arbitrary proceedings of the minister thus lost the last republican semblance, which had hitherto softened them, and the desolation of the senate made his domineering rule be seen in all its obnoxiousness. The Regent now felt, that she had a master over her, and from that moment the banishment of the minister was decreed. She despatched, with this object, her private secretary, Thomas Armenteros, to Spain, to acquaint the king with the circumstances in which the Cardinal was placed, to apprise him of all the intimations of the nobles, and in this manner, to cause the resolve for his banishment to arise with the king himself. What she did not like to trust to her letter, Armenteros was ordered in an ingenious manner to interweave in the oral communication, which the king would probably require from him. Armenteros fulfilled his commission with all the ability of a consummate courtier; but an audience of four hours could not overthrow the work of many years, nor destroy in Philip's mind his opinion of his minister, which was there established for perpetuity. Long did the monarch consult with his policy and his advantage, until, at last, Granvella himself came to the aid of his wavering resolution and voluntarily solicited his dismissal, which, he feared, he could no longer escape. What the detestation of the whole Netherlandish nation could not effect, was obtained by the contemptuous treatment of the nobility; he was, at last, weary of a power, which

was no longer feared, and exposed him less to envy than to infamy.

Perhaps he trembled, as some have believed, for his life, which was certainly in more than imaginary danger; perhaps he wished to receive his dismissal from the king rather under the name of a boon than of a command, and, after the example of those Romans, meet with dignity a fall, which he could no longer avoid. Philip himself, it appears preferred generously according to the Netherlandish nation a request now, to yielding at a later period to a demand and hoped at least to merit their thanks by a measure, which necessity extorted from him. His fears prevailed over his obstinacy, and prudence overcame his pride.

Granvella doubted not for a moment what the decision of the king would be. A few days after the return of Armenteros he saw humility and flattery disappear from the few faces, which had, till then, still servilely smiled upon him; the last small crowd of base eye-servants vanished from around his person, his threshold was forsaken; he perceived that the fructifying warmth had left him.


Detraction, which had assailed him during his whole administration, did not spare him even in the moment when he resigned. A short time before he laid down his office, people did not scruple to assert, that he expressed a wish to be reconciled with the Prince of Orange and the Count of Egmont, and even offered, if their forgiveness could be hoped for on those terms, to ask pardon

of them on his knees. It is base and contemptible to sully the memory of an extraordinary man with such a report, but it is still more base and contemptible, to hand it down to posterity. Granvella submitted to the royal command with dignified composure. Already a few months previously, he had written to the Duke of Alba, in Spain, to prepare him a place of refuge in Madrid, in case of his having to quit the Netherlands. The latter long bethought himself, if it was advisable to invite thither so dangerous a rival in the favour of his King, or to deny so important a friend, so valuable an instrument of his old hatred against the Netherlandish nobles. Revenge prevailed over his fear, and he strenuously supported Granvella's request with the monarch. But his intercession remained fruitless. Armenteros had persuaded the King that the stay of his Minister in Madrid would bring back again, with increased violence, all the complaints of the Netherlandish nation, to which he had been sacrificed; for then, he said, the source itself would be believed to be poisoned by him, whose outlets only he had till now been charged with corrupting. He, therefore, sent him to the county of Burgundy, his native land, for which a decent pretext presented itself. The Cardinal gave to his departure from Brussels the appearance of an unimportant journey, from which he would return in a few days. At the same time, however, all the State Counsellors, who, under his administration, had voluntarily ex-

iled themselves, received command from the court, to resume their seats in the senate at Brussels. Although this latter circumstance made his return not very credible, and that invention of his was discovered to be merely pride in distress, yet the remotest possibility of his return, nevertheless, kept down the triumph which was solemnised over his departure. The Regent herself appears to have been undecided what she should consider true about that report; for she renewed, in a fresh letter to the King, all the representations and grounds, which ought to restrain him from permitting this Minister to come back. Granvella himself endeavoured, in his correspondence with Barlaimont and Viglius, to support this rumour and at least to alarm, through unsubstantial dreams, his enemies, whom he could no longer punish by his presence. The fear of the influence of this man was so exceedingly great, that he was at last driven even from his own native country.

After Pius the 4th was dead, Granvella made a journey to Rome, to be present at the election of a new Pope, and there, at the same time, to attend to some commissions of his master, whose confidence in him remained unshaken. The latter soon after made him viceroy of Naples, where he succumbed to the seductions of the climate and suffered a spirit, which no vicissitude had bent, to be overcome by voluptuousness. He was sixty two years old, when the King received him back to Spain, where he continued to ad-

minister the affairs of Italy with unlimited power. A gloomy old age and the self-satisfied pride of a sexagenarian administration made him a harsh and rigid judge of the opinions of others, a slave of custom and a wearisome panegyrist of past times. But the policy of the closing century was the policy of the opening one no longer. — The youth of the new Ministry were soon tired of so imperious a superintendent, and Philip himself began to shun a counsellor, who found the deeds of his father alone worthy of praise. Nevertheless, when the conquest of Portugal called Philip to Lisbon, he confided to him, at last, his Spanish territories. Finally, he died on an Italian tour in the town of Mantua, in the seventy third year of his life, and in the full enjoyment of his glory, after he had possessed for forty years uninterruptedly, the confidence of his King.



THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

(1564.) Immediately after the departure of the Minister, all the happy consequences, which were promised from his withdrawal, shewed themselves. The disaffected nobles resumed their seats in the Council, and again devoted themselves to the affairs of the state with redoubled zeal, in order to give no room for regret for him, whom they had driven away, and to prove, by the fortunate progress of the state administration, that they could do without him. The crowd round the Dutchess was great. All vied with one another in readiness, in submission and zeal in her service; work was carried on till late at night; the greatest unanimity existed between all the three Councils, the best understanding between the court and the states. From the goodheartedness of the Netherlandish nobility everything was to be had, as soon as their pride and selfwill was flattered by confidence and obliging treatment. The Regent took advantage of the first joy of the nation, to beguile them into the acquiescence in some taxes, which under the preceding administration she could not have extorted. The great credit of the nobility

supported her in this most effectually, and she soon learned from this nation the secret, which has been so often verified in the German Diet; that much must be demanded, in order to get anything from them.

The Regent saw herself, with pleasure, liberated from her long thralldom; the emulous industry of the nobility lightened for her the burthen of business, and their insinuating humility allowed her to feel the full sweetness of her power.

(1564.) Granvella had been overthrown, but his party still remained. His policy lived in his creatures, whom he left behind him in the Privy Council and in the Chamber of Finance. Hatred still smouldered amongst the factions, long after the leader was banished, and the names of the Orange and Royalist parties, of the Patriots and Cardinalists, still continued to divide the Senate and to keep up the flames of discord. Viglius Zuichem of Aytta, President of the Privy Council, State Counsellor and Keeper of the Seal, was now held to be the most important person in the Senate and the most powerful prop of the crown and the tiara. This highly meritorious old man, whom we have to thank for some valuable contributions towards the history of the Netherlandish rebellion, and whose confidential correspondence with his friends has generally been our guide in the narration of the same, was one of the greatest lawyers of his time, as well as a Theologian and priest, and had, already, under the Emperor, filled

the most important offices. Intercourse with the most learned men, who adorned the age in which he lived, and at the head of whom stood Erasmus of Rotterdam, combined with frequent travels, which he performed in the service of the Emperor, had extended the sphere of his information and experience, and in many points raised his principles above his times. The fame of his erudition filled the whole century in which he lived, and has handed his name down to posterity. When, in the year 1548, at the Diet of Augsburg, the connection of the Netherlands with the German empire was to be settled, Charles the 5th sent this Statesman thither, to manage the interests of the Provinces, his ability principally aided in guiding the negotiations to the advantage of the Netherlands. After the death of the Emperor, Viglius was one of the most eminent ministers, bequeathed to Philip by his father, and one of the few in whom he honored his memory. The fortune of the minister Granvella, with whom an early acquaintance had united him, raised him likewise, but he did not share the fall of his patron, because he had not shared his lust of power and the hatred which attached to him. A residence of 20 years in the Provinces, where the most important affairs were entrusted to him, the most approved loyalty to his king, and the most zealous adherence to the Catholic faith, made him one of the most distinguished instruments of royalty in the Netherlands.

Viglius was a man of learning, but no thinker; an experienced Statesman, but not possessed of an enlightened mind; not of an intellect sufficiently powerful to break, like his friend Erasmus, the fetters of error, and, far less still, sufficiently bad, to make them, like his predecessor, Granvella, serve his own passions. Too weak and too timid, to follow boldly the guidance of his own reason, he preferred trusting to the more convenient path of his conscience; a thing was just, so soon as it became his duty; he belonged to those honest men, who are indispensable to bad ones; deceit calculated on his integrity. Half a century later, he would have received his immortality from the freedom, which he now aided in oppressing. In the Privy Council at Brussels he was the servant of tyranny, in the Parliament in London, or in the Senate at Amsterdam he would have died, perhaps, like Thomas Moore and Olden Barneveldt.

The opposition had a no less formidable antagonist than Viglius, in the President of the Council of Finance, the Count Barlaimont. The historians have given us but little information, regarding the services and the opinions of this man; the dazzling greatness of his predecessor, the Cardinal Granvella, obscured him; after the latter had disappeared from the stage, the superiority of the opposite party kept him down, but even the little that we can find respecting him, diffuses a favourable light over his character. More than once,

the Prince of Orange exerted himself, to detach him from the interests of the Cardinal and to incorporate him in his own party — sufficient proof that he placed a value on this conquest. All his efforts failed, which shews, that he had to do with no vacillating character. More than once, we see him, alone amongst all the members of the Council, step forth against the superior faction, and protect against universal opposition the interests of the crown, which were already in peril of being sacrificed. When the Prince of Orange had assembled the knights of the Golden Fleece in his house, in order to form a preparatory resolution for the removal of the Inquisition, Barlaimont was the first who denounced the illegality of this proceeding, and the first who informed the Regent thereof. Some time after, the Prince asked him, if the Regent knew of that assembly, and Barlaimont hesitated not a moment to avow to him the truth. All the steps, which have been ascribed to him, bespeak a man, whom neither example, nor the fear of man tempted, who, with firm courage and indomitable constancy, remained faithful to the party, which he had once chosen, who, however, at the same time, entertained too proud and too despotic notions, to have selected any other.

We have, further, amongst the adherents of the royal party at Brussels, the names of the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Mannsfeld, Megen and Aremberg — all three native Netherlanders, and, therefore, as it appeared, bound

equally with the whole Netherlandish nobility, to labour in opposition to the hierarchy and the royal power in their native country. So much the more must the contrary spirit of their behaviour surprise us, which is the more remarkable, since we find them on terms of friendship with the most eminent members of the faction, and anything but insensible to the common grievances of their country.

But they found not in their breasts selfconfidence, nor heroism enough to venture on an unequal contest with so superior an antagonist. With pusillanimous cunning they subjected their just discontent to the law of necessity, and imposed a hard sacrifice on their pride, because their pampered vanity had no more to offer. Too thrifty and too discreet, to wish to extort from the justice or the fear of their sovereign the certain good, which they already possessed from his voluntary generosity, or to resign a real happiness, in order to preserve the shadow of another, they rather employed the propitious moment, to drive a traffic with their constancy, which, now, from the general defection of the nobility, had risen in value. Caring little for true glory, they allowed their ambition to decide which party they should take; for the ambition of base minds prefers to bow beneath the hard yoke of compulsion, much rather than the gentle sway of a superior mind. Small would have been the favour conferred, if they had bestowed themselves on the Prince of Orange; but their connection with royalty made them so

much the more formidable opponents to him. There their name would have been lost amongst the numerous adherents and in the splendour of their rival; on the deserted side of the court their insignificant merit acquired lustre. The families of Nassau and Croi, to which latter the Duke of Arschot belonged, had been, under several governments, competitors for influence and honours, and their jealousy had kept up an old family feud between them, which religious differences finally made irreconcilable. The house of Croi stood, since time immemorial, in high renown for devotion and papistical sanctity; the Counts of Nassau had gone over to the new sect — sufficient reasons that Philip of Croi, Duke of Arschot should prefer a party, which placed him the most in opposition to the Prince of Orange. The Court did not fail to extract an advantage from this private feud and to oppose so important an enemy to the increasing influence of the House of Nassau in the Republic. The Counts of Mannsfeld and Megen had, till now, been the most confidential friends of the Count of Egmont. In common with him they had raised their voice against the Minister; had, in common, resisted the Inquisition and the Edicts, and, up to this time, had held with him honestly, up to the last limits of their duty. — These three friends now separated on the cross road of danger. Egmont's unsuspecting virtue hurried him perpetually onward on the road to ruin; his friends, admonished of the danger, began in good time to

think of an advantageous retreat. There still exist letters, which have descended to us, interchanged between the Counts of Egmont and Mansfeld, and which, although written at a later period, give us a true picture of their connection. "If I," replied the Count of Mansfeld to his friend, who had reproved him in a friendly manner for his defection to the King, "if I was formerly of opinion, that the general good made the withdrawal of the Inquisition, the mitigation of the Edicts and the removal of the Cardinal Granvella necessary, the King has now acquiesced in this wish, and the cause of our complaints is removed. We have already undertaken too much against the Majesty of the sovereign and the authority of the church; it is the highest time for us to turn, in order that we may be able to meet the King, whenever he comes, with open brow, without anxiety. I do not dread his punishment, as regards my own person; with confident courage I would, at a sign from him, present myself in Spain and confidently await my sentence from his justice and goodness. I do not say this, as if I doubted whether Count Egmont can assert the same, but he will act prudently, in securing his safety more and more, and in removing suspicion from his actions. "If I hear," he says in conclusion, "that he has given my admonitions their due weight, our friendship continues; if not, I feel myself in that case strong enough, to sacrifice all human ties to my duty and to honor."

The enlarged power of the nobility exposed the Republic to almost a greater evil than that, which it had just escaped through the banishment of the Minister. Impoverished by long habits of luxury, which at the same time had relaxed their morals, and to which they were already too much addicted, to be able, now, for the first time, to renounce them, they yielded to the perilous opportunity of indulging their ruling inclination, and of again repairing the expiring lustre of their fortunes. Extravagance brought on the thirst for gain and this introduced usury. Secular and ecclesiastical offices were exposed for sale; posts of honor, privileges, patents sold to the highest bidder; even justice was made a trade. Whomsoever the Privy Council had condemned, was declared free by the Council of State; what the former denied, was to be purchased from the latter. The Council of State, indeed, afterwards retorted this accusation on the two other Councils; but it was its own example, which corrupted the latter. Inventive rapacity opened new sources of gain. Life, liberty and religion were insured for a certain sum, like landed estates; for gold, murderers and malefactors were free, and the nation was plundered by a lottery. Without regard to rank or merit, the servants and creatures of the State Counsellors and governors of provinces were seen pushed into the most important employments; whoever had any petition to make at Court, was obliged to take his way through the governors of provinces and

their most inferior servants. No artifice of seduction was spared to implicate in these excesses the private secretary of the Dutchess, Thomas Armenteros, a hitherto unblameable and upright man. Through pretended professions of attachment and friendship, they contrived to insinuate themselves into his confidence and to destroy his principles through luxurious living; the destructive example infected his morals, and new wants overcame his till now incorruptible virtue. He was now blind to abuses in which he was an accomplice, and drew a veil over the crimes of others, in order to cloak therewith his own also. In connection with him, they robbed the royal exchequer, and defeated the objects of the Government through a bad administration of its resources. Meanwhile, the Regent wandered on in a fond dream of power and activity, which the flattery of the nobles artfully knew how to foster. The ambition of the factions played with the foibles of a woman, and purchased from her real power with empty signs and an humble exterior of submissiveness. She soon belonged entirely to the faction, and imperceptibly changed her principles. In a manner diametrically opposed to her former proceedings, she now, contrary to what was right, brought questions, which belonged to the other Councils, or representations, which Viglius had made to her in private, before the council of State, which was swayed by the faction, just, as formerly, under Granvella's administration, she had improperly

neglected it. Nearly all business and all influence was now diverted to the Governors of Provinces. All petitions came to them, all lucrative appointments were bestowed by them. It went so far, that they withdrew law-proceedings from the municipal authorities of the towns and brought them before their own tribunals. The respectability of the Provincial courts decreased, as theirs extended, and with the respectability of the municipal functionaries fell the administration of justice and civil order. The smaller courts soon followed the example of the government of the country. The spirit, which ruled the council of State at Brussels, soon diffused itself through all the Provinces. Bribery, indulgences, robbery, venality of justice, were universal in the courts of judicature of the country; morals degenerated, and the new sects availed themselves of this licentiousness, to extend their circle. The tolerant religious opinions of the nobles, who, either themselves inclined to the side of the innovators, or, at least, detested the Inquisition as an instrument of despotism, had extinguished the severity of the religious edicts; and through the letters of indemnity, which were bestowed on many Protestants, the holy office was deprived of its best victims. In no way could the nobility more agreeably announce to the nation its present new share in the government of the country, than in sacrificing to it the hated tribunal of the Inquisition — and inclination induced them thereto still more, than the dictates of policy. The nation

passed, in a moment, from the most oppressive constraint of intolerance into a condition of freedom, to which it had already become too much unaccustomed, to support it with moderation. The Inquisitors, robbed of the aid of the municipal authorities, saw themselves more derided, than feared. In Bruges the Town Council caused some even of their own servants to be placed in confinement, on bread and water, who were about to lay hands upon a heretic. About this very time, in Antwerp, where the mob had made a futile attempt to rescue a heretic from the holy office, an inscription, written in blood was placarded in the public market-place, which imported, that a number of persons had bound themselves by oath, to avenge the death of that innocent person.

From the corruption, which pervaded the whole Council of State, the Privy Council and the chamber of Finance, in which Viglius and Barlaumont were Presidents, had, as yet, for the most part kept themselves pure.

As the Faction did not succeed in insinuating their adherents into those two Councils, they had no expedient left them, than to render both entirely inefficient, and to transfer their business to the Council of State. To carry through this project, the Prince of Orange sought to secure the aid of the other State Counsellors. „They were called, indeed, Senators“, he frequently declared to his adherents, „but others possessed the power.

If gold was wanted, to pay the troops; or when the question was, to repress the spreading heresy, or to keep the people in order, then they were called upon; although they were the guardians, neither of the treasury, nor of the laws, but only the organs, through which the other two Councils operated on the State. And yet they would be, alone, equal to the whole administration of the country, which had been uselessly portioned out amongst three separate Chambers, if they would only agree with one another to reincorporate in the Council of State these two branches of government, which had been torn from it, whereby one soul might animate the whole body“. A plan was preliminarily and in secret agreed on, in accordance with which twelve new Knights of the Fleece were to be added to the Council of State, the administration of justice again restored to the tribunal at Malines, to which it properly belonged, the letters of grace, patents and so forth left to the President Viglius, but the management of money committed to them. All the difficulties, indeed, were foreseen, which the distrust of the court, and the jealousy of the increasing power of the nobility would oppose to this innovation; in order, therefore, to constrain the Regent, some of the principal officers of the Army were put forward as a cloak, who were to annoy the court at Brussels with boisterous calls for arrears, and to threaten a rebellion in case of denial. It was contrived, to assail the Regent with numerous pe-

titions and memorials, which complained of the tardiness of justice, and exaggerated the danger, which was to be apprehended from the daily growth of heresy. Nothing was omitted to give her so alarming a picture of the shattered state of civil order, of the administration of justice and of the finances, that she awoke with terror from the delusion, in which she had hitherto been cradled. She called all the three Councils together, in order to consult on the means, by which these disorders should be met. The majority of voices were for the despatch of an extraordinary ambassador to Spain, who should acquaint the King with the true position of affairs, by a circumstantial and vivid delineation of them, and perhaps prevail on him to adopt better measures. Viglius, who had not the slightest suspicion of the secret plan of the faction, opposed his opinion. „The evil, he said, which was complained of, was undoubtedly great and not to be neglected, but it was not irremediable. Justice was badly administered, but from no other reason, than because the nobles themselves brought the municipal authorities into disrepute through their contemptuous treatment of them, and because the governors of Provinces did not sufficiently support them. Heresy was on the increase, because the secular arm deserted the spiritual judges, and because the lower orders, after the example of the nobles, had doffed their reverence for the officers of government. Not so much the bad administration of the finances, as rather

the former wars and the State exigencies of the King, had burthened the Provinces with this amount of debt; from which moderate laws would by degrees free them. If the Council of State would circumscribe its indulgences, charters and remissions, if it would commence the reformation of morals with itself, respect the laws more, and restore to the municipal functionaries their former consideration; in short, if the Councils and the governors of Provinces only first fulfilled their duties, these complaints would soon cease. Wherefore, then, a new ambassador to Spain, when nothing new had occurred to justify this extraordinary expedient? If, however, it was insisted upon, he would not withstand the general voice; only, he made it a condition, that the most important commission of the envoy should, in that case, be, to prevail on the King to make them a speedy visit“.

There was but one voice as to the choice of an envoy. Amongst all the Netherlandish nobles Count Egmont appeared to be the only one, who could give equal satisfaction to both parties. His declared hatred of the Inquisition, his patriotic and free sentiments, and the unblemished integrity of his character gave to the Republic sufficient surety for his conduct; the grounds on which he would necessarily be welcome to the King, have been already stated above. As, with princes, the first appearance often secures their decision, so Egmont's engaging figure would support his eloquence, and give an aid to his request, which

with Kings is indispensable in even the most trifling matter. Egmont himself wished for the embassy, in order to adjust some family matters with his Sovereign.

Meanwhile, the ecclesiastical council at Trent was terminated, and its decrees made known to the whole of Catholic Christendom. But these decrees, far from accomplishing the object of the Synod and satisfying the expectation of religious parties, had rather widened the breach between both churches, and made the schism irremediable and eternal.

The old doctrine, instead of being purified, had now only received more precision and greater authority. All the subtilities of this doctrine, all the arts and arrogations of the holy see, which had hitherto rested more on arbitrary will, had now passed into laws, and were raised to a system. Those uses and abuses, which, during the barbarous times of superstition and ignorance had crept into christianity, were now declared essential parts of worship, and anathemas were hurled against every one who dared to contradict these dogmas, or withdraw from these observances. Anathemas against those, who doubted of the miraculous power of relics, who did not honor the bones of martyrs, and who were so bold as to think the intercession of Saints inefficacious. The power of granting indulgences, the first source of the defection from the See of Rome, was now propounded in an irrefragable article of faith, and

monkdom was taken under protection by an express decree of the Synod, which permitted that males might take the vows at sixteen and girls at twelve. All the opinions of the Protestants were condemned without exception; not a single resolution was framed for their advantage, not a single step taken, to lead them back by mild means into the lap of the mother church. The wearisome chronicles of the synods and the absurdity of their decisions increased, if possible amongst the latter, the hearty contempt, which they had long entertained for popery, and exposed to their attacks new and hitherto still overlooked assailable points. It was an unfortunate thought, to bring too near to the mysteries of the church the glaring torch of reason, and to combat with syllogisms for the tenets of a blind belief.

Moreover, the decrees of the Council did not even so much as satisfy all Catholic powers. France rejected them entirely, as well to please the Calvinists, as also because she was offended by the superiority, which the pope arrogated to himself over the council; some Catholic Princes, also, of Germany declared against it. Little as Philip the 2nd was pleased with certain articles therein, which trenched too closely upon his own rights, over which no monarch in the world could watch more jealously than himself; highly as the great influence of the Pope over the council and its arbitrary, precipitate dissolution had offended him; just, as was the cause of hostility, which

the pope had given him by the disregard shown to his ambassador, he, nevertheless, shewed himself willing to acknowledge the decrees of the Council, which, even in this form, favoured his darling object, the extirpation of heretics. All other political considerations were postponed to this object, and he commanded that they should be published in all his dominions.

The Spirit of revolt, which had diffused itself through the Netherlandish Provinces, required this new incentive no longer. The minds of men were in a ferment, the character of the Romish church had sunk to the lowest point in the opinion of many; under such circumstances the imperious and often ill chosen decrees of the Council could not be anything but obnoxious; but Philip the 2nd could not so far belie his character, as to allow a different religion, to people, who had a different soil and other laws. The Regent received the strictest orders, to exact in the Netherlands the very same obedience to the decrees of Trent, which was yielded to them in Spain and Italy.

The decrees met with the warmest opposition in the Council of State at Brussels. "The nation" — William of Orange declared — "neither would nor could acknowledge them, since they were, for the most part, opposed to the fundamental principles of their constitution, and had been, for similar reasons rejected by several Catholic princes." Nearly the whole Council of State was on the side of Orange; most votes

were to the effect, that the King should be persuaded, either to retract the decrees entirely, or, at least, to publish them under certain limitations. This was resisted by Viglius, who insisted on the royal command to the letter. "The church," he said, "had in all ages maintained the purity of its doctrines and the strictness of its discipline through such general councils. No more efficacious remedy could be opposed to the errors in faith, which had so long disturbed their country, than these very decrees, the rejection of which was now urged. If even they were here and there at variance with the rights of the citizens and of the constitution, this was an evil which could be easily met by an able and considerate management of them. For the rest it redounded to the honor of their sovereign, the King of Spain, that he alone, above all the princes of his time, could not be constrained to subject his better judgment to necessity, and, through fear, reject measures, which the welfare of the church demanded from him and which the happiness of his subjects made his duty." — As the decrees contained several things which affected the rights of the crown itself, some thereby took occasion, to propose that these sections, at least, should be omitted in the proclamation. By this means the King would, by a happy contrivance, be spared these obnoxious and dishonorable articles; they would use the national freedom of the Netherlands as a pretext, and lend the name

of the Republic to this encroachment on the authority of the Council. But the King had caused the decrees to be received in his other dominions, unconditionally, and carried them through, and it was not to be expected that he would give the other Catholic powers this example of opposition and himself undermine the edifice, the foundation of which he had been so assiduous in laying.



COUNT EGMONT IN SPAIN.

To make representation to the King on the subject of these decrees; to win from him a milder line of action towards the Protestants, and to propose the suppression of the other two councils, was the commission, which was given to the Count of Egmont on the part of the malcontents; to bring to the ear of the monarch the refractory spirit of the people of the Netherlands towards the edicts; to convince him of the impossibility of upholding these edicts in their full severity, to open his eyes to the bad state of the military concerns and of the finances in his Netherlandish States, was his charge from the Regent.

The appointment of the Count was drawn up by the President Viglius. It contained heavy complaints of the decay of justice, the growth of heresy and the exhaustion of the treasury. A personal visit from the King was urgently pressed. The rest was left to the eloquence of the envoy, who received a hint from the Regent, not to let so fair an opportunity escape, of establishing himself in the favour of his Sovereign.

The instructions of the count, and the representations which were to be made through him to the King, appeared to the Prince of Orange to be drawn up in far too general and vague expressions. "The picture", he said, which the President has drawn of our grievances, falls far below the truth. How can the King apply the most suitable remedies, if we conceal from him the sources of the evil? Let us not represent the numbers of the heretics, inferior to what they really are; let us candidly acknowledge that every Province, every hamlet, however small, swarms with them; let us, also, not disguise that they despise the penal statutes and entertain but little reverence for the government. Wherefore, then, this concealment? Let us openly avow to the King, that the Republic cannot continue in this condition. The Privy Council, indeed, to whom this very disorganisation is welcome will pronounce differently. For whence else the bad administration of justice, this universal corruption of the courts of law, but from its rapacity, which nothing can satiate? Whence this pomp, this scandalous luxury of those creatures, whom we have seen rise from the dust, if they have not arrived at it through bribery? Do we not daily hear from the people, that no other key can unlock them, but gold; and do not their differences amongst themselves even prove, how little they are swayed by love of the commonwealth? How can men advise for the public good, who are the slaves of their own passions? Do

they think, forsooth, that we, the governors of the Provinces, are with our soldiers to stand ready to serve the dictates of an infamous lictor? Let them set bounds to their indulgences and remissions, with which they are so lavish towards the very persons, to whom we deny them. No one can remit a crime, without sinning against society and contributing to the increase of the general evil. I, I confess it, have never approved, that the secrets of the state and the affairs of government should be distributed amongst so many councils. The council of state is sufficient for all, several patriots have already felt this in silence, and I now declare it openly. I declare, that I know no other remedy for all the evils which are complained of, than that both those chambers should merge in the council of State. This is the point to obtain which from the King, must be our endeavour, or this new embassy is again entirely fruitless and useless. And the Prince now communicated to the assembled Senate the plan, which has been mentioned above. Viglius, against whom this new proposition was individually and mainly directed, and whose eyes were now suddenly opened, was overcome by the violence of his vexation. The agitation of his feelings was too much for his feeble body, and he was found, on the following morning, paralysed by apoplexy and in danger of his life.

His place was supplied by Joachim Hopper, from the Privy Council at Brussels, a man of old

fashioned morals and unblameable integrity, the President's most trusted and worthiest friend. *) He made, in favour of the Orange party, some farther additions to the despatches of the Ambassador, which related to the abolition of the Inquisition and the union of the three councils, not so much with the consent of the Regent, as rather, because she 'did not forbid it. When, afterwards, the Count of Egmont took leave of the President, who had meanwhile recovered from his attack, the latter requested him, to bring with him, from Spain permission for him to resign his appointment. His times, he declared, were past; he wished, after the example of his friend and predecessor Granvella, to retire into the quiet of private life, and to anticipate the uncertainty of fortune. His Genius warned him of a stormy future, in which he would not wish to be involved.

The Count of Egmont embarked on his journey to Spain in January of the year 1565, and was received there with a kindness and respect, which, before him, none of his rank had experienced. All the nobles of Castile, subdued by the example of their King, or rather true to his policy, appeared to have laid aside their ancient grudge against the Flemish nobility, and vied with one

*) Vita Vigl. §. 89. The same person, from whose memoirs I have drawn many elucidations of this epoch. His subsequent journey to Spain gave rise to the correspondence between him and the President, which is one of the most precious documents relative to this history.

another in the contest to win him through the affability of their behaviour. All his private requests were granted to him by the King; nay, his expectations were in this point even exceeded, and during the whole period of his stay there, he had ample cause to boast of the hospitality of the monarch. The latter gave him the most marked assurances of his love to the Netherlandish people, and held out hopes, that he was not disinclined, to accomodate himself to the general wish, and remit somewhat of the severity of the religious edicts. At the same time, however, he appointed in Madrid a commission of theologians, to whom the question was propounded, if it was necessary, to grant to the Provinces the religious toleration demanded by them. As the majority of them were of opinion, that the peculiar constitution of the Netherlands, and the fear of a rebellion might here well excuse a degree of forbearance, the question was repeated more pointedly. "He did not seek to know," he said, "if he might do so, but if he must?" When the latter question was answered in the negative, he rose from his seat and kneeled down before a crucifix. "Then I supplicate Thee, Majesty of the Almighty;" he exclaimed, "that Thou wilt never suffer me to sink so low, as to be a sovereign over those, who reject Thee!" And nearly according to this pattern turned out the measures, which he had resolved to adopt in the Netherlands. On the article of religion the resolution of this monarch was taken once for ever;

the most urgent necessity might, perhaps, have constrained him to be less rigid in the exaction of the penal statutes, but never, to repeal them legally, or even to restrict them. Egmont represented to him, how much the public executions themselves of the heretics daily strengthened the number of their followers, as the example of their courage and of their joyousness in death filled the spectators with the deepest admiration, and awakened in them high opinions of a doctrine, which could make heroes of its disciples. This representation was not lost upon the King, but it effected something entirely different from what it was intended. In order to avoid these seductive scenes and not thereby at all to compromise the severity of the Edicts, he fell upon an expedient, and determined that the executions for the future — should take place in private. The answer of the King on the subject of the embassy addressed to the Regent was given to the Count in writing. Before the King dismissed him, he could not avoid calling him to account for his behaviour towards Granvella, in which he particularly mentioned the livery invented in derision of the Cardinal. Egmont protested that the whole had been nothing more than a table jest, and nothing was thereby intended, that violated the sense of duty towards the monarch. If he knew, he said, that it had entered the mind of any individual among them, to entertain so improper an idea, he himself would challenge him to the combat.

At his departure the monarch made him a present of 50,000 florins, and added moreover, the assurance, that he would take upon himself the settlement of his daughter. He permitted him likewise to take with him to Brussels the young Farnese of Parma, in order thereby to shew an attention to the Regent, his mother. The pretended mildness of the King, and the professions of a regard for the Netherlandish nation, which he never felt, deceived the openheartedness of the Fleming. Happy through the felicity which he thought he was the bearer of to his country, and from which it was never further removed, he left Madrid, satisfied beyond all expectation to fill all the Netherlandish Provinces with the fame of their good monarch. The very opening of the royal answer in the Council of State at Brussels considerably lowered these pleasing hopes. "Although his resolve in regard to the religious edicts," this was its tenor, was firm and immoveable, and he would rather lose a thousand lives than consent to alter but a single letter thereof, he would not, however, moved by the representations of the Count of Egmont, on the other hand, leave any gentle means untried by which the people might be guarded against the destructive nature of heresy, and snatched from that punishment, which must, otherwise, infallibly overtake them. As he had now learned from the Count, that the principal cause of the hitherto existing errors in the faith was to be sought in the moral depravity of the

Netherlandish clergy, the bad instruction and the neglected education of the young, he herewith commissioned the Regent to appoint a special commission of three bishops and some of the most erudite theologians, whose business it should be, to consult about the necessary reform, that the people might no further be led astray through scandal, nor plunge into error through ignorance. As he had, moreover, heard, that the public executions of the heretics did but give them an opportunity of boastfully displaying a foolhardy courage and of deluding the common herd through an affectation of the glory of martyrdom, the commission was to propound means, how to give these executions more secrecy and deprive condemned heretics of the honor of their firmness." In order, however, to be sure that this select committee did not overstep the duty entrusted to them, he expressly required that the Bishop of Ypern, a man who could be relied on, and the most determined zealot for the Catholic faith, should be one of the counsellors of the commission. Their deliberations should proceed, if possible, in secrecy, and under the pretext of having for their object the introduction of the decrees of Trent; in order, probably, not to disquiet the court of Rome through this private council, and not to afford thereby any encouragement to the spirit of rebellion in the Provinces. At the session itself, the Dutchess was to be present, together with some of her loyally disposed Counsellors,

and, afterwards, she was to despatch to him written information of that which was therein transacted. For her most pressing wants he sent her in the meanwhile some money. He gave her hopes of a visit from himself in person; first, however, it was requisite that the war with the Turks, who were just then expected before Malta, should be terminated. The proposed augmentation of the Council of State and the union of the Privy Council and Chamber of Finance with the same, was passed over in perfect silence, except that the Duke of Arschof, who is known to us as a zealous royalist, obtained a seat and voice in the latter. Viglius indeed, was allowed to retire from the Presidentship of the Privy Council; he was obliged however, nevertheless, to continue to discharge its duties for four more full years, because his successor, Carl Tyssenaque of the council for Netherlandish affairs in Madrid, was detained there for that length of time.



SEVERER RELIGIOUS-EDICTS.

UNIVERSAL OPPOSITION OF THE NATION.

Egmont was scarce returned, when severer orders against heretics, which, as it were, pursued him from Spain, contradicted the joyful tidings, which he had brought back regarding the happy change in the sentiments of the monarch. With them came at the same time a transcript of the decrees of Trent, as they were acknowledged in Spain and were now to be proclaimed in the Netherlands also; as likewise the countersigned death warrants of some Anabaptists and other kinds of heretics. "The Count," William the Silent was now heard to say, has been beguiled by Spanish cunning. Selflove and vanity have blinded his penetration; for his own advantage he has forgotten the general welfare." The treachery of the Spanish ministry was now exposed; this dishonest proceeding roused the indignation of the noblest in the land. But no one felt it more acutely than Count Egmont, who now perceived himself to have been the plaything of Spanish duplicity, and to have unwittingly become the betrayer of his own country. "These specious

favours then," he complained loudly and bitterly, "were nothing but an artifice, to expose me to the ridicule of my fellow citizens, and to destroy my good name. If the King is determined to keep the promises, which he made to me in Spain, in such a fashion as this, let, who will, take Flanders; I will publicly prove by my secession from business that I have no share in this breach of faith." In fact, the Spanish ministry could hardly have selected a more fitting means, to break the credit of so important a man, as to exhibit him publicly to his fellow-citizens, who adored him—as one of whom they had made a jest.

Meanwhile the commission had unanimously come to the following decision, which was immediately despatched to the King: "For the religious instruction of the people, the moral reformation of the clergy, and the education of youth there had been, already, such abundant provision made in the decrees of Trent, that it was now only requisite, to bring these decrees into execution as speedily as possible. The imperial edicts against the heretics should on no account suffer any alteration, the courts of justice however might be secretly instructed, to punish with death only, obstinate heretics and their preachers, to make a difference between the sects themselves and to allow of consideration with regard to the age, rank, sex and disposition of the persons accused. If it was really the case, that public executions inflamed fanaticism still more, then, perhaps, the

unheroic, less observed, and yet no less severe punishment of the galleys, would be best adapted to bring down these high notions of martyrdom. Delinquencies arising from mere levity, curiosity and thoughtlessness might be punished by fines, exile or even corporal chastisement.»

While during these deliberations, which it was requisite to send, first to Madrid and wait until they were again sent back from thence, the time passed away unprofitably, the proceedings against the sectaries were suspended, or, at least, conducted very supinely. Since the expulsion of the minister Gránvella, the Anarchy, which prevailed in the higher councils, and extended itself thence through the provincial courts of justice, combined with the mild feelings of the nobles on the subject of religion, had raised the courage of the sects, and given free play to the proselyting mania of their Apostles. The Inquisitional judges were fallen into contempt through the want of aid from the Secular arm, which in several places openly took their victims into protection. The Catholic part of the nation had formed great expectations from the decrees of the Ecclesiastical Council of Trent, as well as from Egmont's embassy to Spain, which latter hopes, through the joyous tidings which the Count brought back, and, in the integrity of his heart, left nothing undone to publish, seemed to be justified. The more the nation had become disused to severity in matters relating to religion, the more, acutely must they have

felt, a sudden and sharpened renewal of the same. In this position of affairs the royal rescript arrived from Spain, in which the opinion of the Bishops and the last inquiries of the Regent were answered. «Whatever interpretation the Count of Egmont,» such was its tenor, «may have given to the oral expressions of the King, it had never, not even in the remotest manner, entered his mind, to alter even the least portion of the penal Statutes, which the Emperor, his father, had five and thirty years ago published in the Provinces. These edicts he, therefore, commanded, should henceforth be executed most rigidly, the Inquisition should receive the most active support from the Secular arm, and the decrees of the ecclesiastical council at Trent be irrevocably and unconditionally acknowledged in all the Provinces of his Netherlands. He acquiesced fully in the opinion of the Bishops and Theologians, except as to the mitigation which they proposed in regard to the age, sex and character of Individuals, since he was of opinion, that his Edicts were in no degree wanting in moderation. To the want of zeal and the disloyalty of the judges alone were the advances to be ascribed, which heresy had hitherto made in the country. Whoever among them, therefore, should for the future be wanting in zeal, must be removed from his office, and a better be substituted in his place. The Inquisition was, without respect to any human consideration, to pursue its path firmly, fearlessly and dispassionately, and

was neither to look before nor behind it. He would approve everything, let it go as far as it would, if it only avoided public scandal.»

This royal letter, to which the Orange party have ascribed all the subsequent calamities of the Netherlands, caused the most violent excitement amongst the State Counsellors, and the expressions which, accidentally or intentionally, fell from them with regard to it in society, spread terror amongst the people. The dread of the Spanish Inquisition returned with new force, and with it they saw already the whole constitution subverted. Already, they fancied they heard prisons being erected, chains and neck fetters forged, and piles of faggots collected. All societies were filled with this discourse, and fear kept them no longer within bounds. Writings were affixed to houses of the nobles, in which they were called upon, as formerly Rome called on her Brutus, to save expiring freedom. Biting pasquinades appeared against the new bishops, tormentors, as they were called; the clergy were ridiculed in comedies, and abuse spared the throne as little, as the Romish See.

Terrified by these rumours, the Regent caused all the Counsellors of State and Knights to be convoked, in order for them to decide on the course to be adopted by her in this perilous crisis. Opinions varied and the dispute was violent. Undecided between fear and duty, they hesitated to come to a conclusion, until, at last, the aged

Senator, Viglius, rose and surprised the whole assembly by his opinion. — «Now,» he said »the idea cannot be entertained for a moment of promulgating the royal command, before the monarch has been prepared for the reception, with which it will now, according to all probability, meet; the inquisitional judges must rather be enjoined, on no account to abuse their power, and, by all means, to proceed without severity.» «But still greater was the astonishment, when the Prince of Orange now stood up and opposed this opinion.» «The royal will,» he said, «is too clear and too precisely stated; has been arrived at through too many deliberations, for us still further to venture, on holding back its full execution, without bringing on ourselves the reproach of the most culpable obstinacy.» — «That I take on myself,» interrupted Viglius, »I oppose myself to his displeasure. If we purchase for him therewith the peace of his Netherlands, this opposition will in the end, win for us his gratitude.» The Regent began already to incline to this opinion, when the Prince interposed with impetuosity.» «What,» he interrupted, «what have the many representations, which we have written to him, what has the embassy accomplished, which we so lately despatched to him? Nothing! — and what then do we wait for more? Shall we, his State - Counsellors, take upon ourselves his entire displeasure, in order, at our own peril, to render him a service for which he will never

thank us?" Undecided and uncertain, the whole assembly, were silent; no one had courage enough to assent to this opinion, and just as little to gain say it; but the Prince had called to his aid the natural timidity of the Regent, which denied her any choice. The consequences of her unfortunate obedience will appear evident, — how, however, if she had been so fortunate as to avoid these consequences through a wise disobedience, how could it be demonstrated, that she had really had cause to fear the same? She selected the most fatal of the two counsels; happen therefrom what would, the royal ordinance should be promulgated. This time, therefore, the faction prevailed, and the only courageous friend of the government who, to serve his monarch, had the courage to incur his displeasure, was driven from the field. This Session terminated the peace of the Regent; from this day the Netherlands reckoned all the storms, which henceforth raged uninterruptedly in their interior. When the Counsellors separated, the Prince of Orange said to one, who stood nearest to him: "Now, said he, will soon be exhibited a great tragedy." The historians of the Spanish party have left nothing undone, to bring the conduct of Orange in this Session into evidence against him, and with this proof of dishonesty to triumph over his character. "He," say they, who in the whole course of affairs up to this time, had, by word and deed, opposed the measures of the court, so long as

any ground was left him to fear that these measures would be carried through, now for the first time stepped forth on its side, when a conscientious execution of the king's orders would probably tend to its injury. In order to convince the king how ill he had acted in disregarding his warnings; in order to be able to boast; „that have I foretold;“ he placed the welfare of his nation at stake, for which, alone, he had till now struggled. The whole tenor of his previous conduct proved, that he held the carrying out of the edicts as an evil; nevertheless, he now, at once, becomes untrue to his own convictions, and follows an opposite plan, although on the side of the nation all the grounds continue, which had prescribed, to him the first; and he does this, simply because the result to the king would be different. „Therefore, it is clear,“ continue his adversaries, „that the welfare of the nation had less influence over him, than his animosity against his Sovereign. In order to gratify his hatred against the latter, he does not care to sacrifice the former.“ But is it then true, that he sacrificed the nation by calling for the promulgation of these edicts? or to speak more accurately, did he bring the edicts into execution, when he insisted on their promulgation? Can it not, on the contrary, be shewn with far more probability, that thus alone he could frustrate them? The nation was in a ferment and the incensed factions would, in all reasonable expectation (for did not Viglius himself

fear it?) evince an opposition, which would compel the king to yield? "Now," says Orange, "my nation has the necessary impulse to contend successfully with tyranny! If I neglect this moment, the latter will find means, through secret negotiations and intrigues, to obtain by stealth, what it failed in by open force. The same object, will be pursued only with greater caution and forbearance; but extremity alone can unite my nation to one purpose, and hurry them on to a bold step." It is clear, therefore, that the Prince changed his language only with regard to the king, but in regard to the people he acted in perfect accordance with all his former behaviour. And what duties could he owe to the king, distinct from those he owed to the Republic? Was he to oppose an arbitrary act in the very moment, when it would become the punishment of its author? Would he have acted well to his native country, if he had spared its oppressor a precipitate act, through which, alone, that country could escape its otherwise unavoidable destiny? An edict, therefore, was issued to all the governors of provinces, in which they were commanded, to bring into the most scrupulous execution the mandates of the Emperor, as, likewise, those which had been passed under the present governments against heretics, the decrees of the ecclesiastical Council at Trent, and those of the episcopal commission which had sate lately, to lend a helping hand to the Inquisition, and also

to admonish thereto in the most impressive manner the officers of Government under their controul. To that end, each such governor was to select from the Council under his authority an efficient man, who should make frequent journeys through the Provinces and institute strict inquiries whether the due obedience was shewn by the inferior officers to the commands given them, and then transmit quarterly, to the capital, an exact statement thereof. A transcript of the decrees of Trent, according to the Spanish original, was sent to the Archbishops and Bishops, with the intimation, that in case of their needing the assistance of the secular power, the governors of their dioceses with their troops were placed at their disposal; if they did not prefer to obtain these from the Regent herself. Against these decrees no privilege availed; the King willed and commanded, however, that the particular territorial rights of the Provinces and towns should not be infringed through its execution.

These commands, which were publicly read in every town by the herald, produced an effect on the people, which in the fullest manner verified the fears of the President Viglius and the hopes of the Prince of Orange. Nearly all the governor and Provinces refused compliance with them, and threatened to throw up their appointments, if it was sought to compel their obedience. "The ordinance," they wrote back, "was based on a

statement of the numbers of the sectaries, which was entirely false.” *)

“Justice was appalled at the prodigious crowd of victims, which daily accumulated under its hands; to destroy by the flames 50,000 or 60,000 persons from their districts was no commission for them.” The inferior clergy, in particular, declared themselves against the decrees of Trent, in which their ignorance and corruption of morals was assailed in the most cruel manner, and by which they were, moreover, threatened with a reform they so much detested. They now sacrificed to their private advantage the highest interests of their church, attacked with bitter revilings the decrees and the whole Council, and scattered the seeds of revolt in the minds of the people. The same outcry was revived, which the monks had formerly raised against the new bishops. The Archbishop of Cambray succeeded at last, but not without great opposition, in causing the decrees

*) The number of the heretics was very unequally computed by the two parties, according as the interests and passions of either of them suggested the increase or diminution of it, and the same party often contradicted itself, when its interest changed. If the question related to new measures of oppression, to the introduction of the inquisitional tribunals and soforth, the numbers of the Protestants were countless and interminable. If, on the other hand, the question was of lenity towards them, of ordinances for their welfare, they were now reduced to such an insignificant number, that it would not repay the trouble of commencing an innovation for this small body of illminded people.

to be proclaimed. It cost more labour in Malines and Utrecht, where the Archbishops were at strife with their clergy, who, as they were accused, preferred bringing the whole church to the brink of ruin, to submitting themselves to a reformation in their morals.

Amongst the Provinces, Brabant raised its voice the loudest. The States of this Province again mooted their great privilege, according to which it was not allowed, to bring a native before a foreign Court of Justice. They spoke loudly of the oath, which the King had sworn to their Statutes, and of the conditions, under which they had vowed submission to him. Louvain, Antwerp, Brussels and Herzogenbusch, solemnly protested in a distinct memorial, which they transmitted to the Regent. The latter, always uncertain, always wavering backwards and forwards between all parties, too timid to obey the King, and far more so to disobey him, caused new sessions to be held, listened to the arguments for and against the question, and, at last, always gave her assent to that opinion, which was of all the most perilous for her. It was proposed to make a new reference to the King in Spain; soon after it was thought that this expedient was far too slow; the danger was urgent, it was necessary to yield to its violence and for the Regent, on her own responsibility, to accommodate the Royal ordinance to the posture of affairs. She, finally, caused the

Annals of Brabant to be examined in order to find a precedent for the present case, in the instructions of the first Inquisitor, whom Charles the 5th had appointed to the Province. These instructions did not correspond with those now given; but had not the King declared that he introduced no innovation? therefore, it was allowable to assimilate the new edicts to the former old statutes. This interpretation gave, indeed, no satisfaction to the high demand of the States of Brabant, who had aimed at the entire abolition of the Inquisition, but it gave the other provinces the signal for similar protests, and an equally courageous opposition. Without giving the Dutchess time to decide thereon, they, on their own authority, ceased to obey the Inquisition and withdrew their aid from it. The Inquisitors, who, but a short time before, had been enjoined to a more rigid execution of their duties by an express order, saw themselves at once deserted by the secular arm, and robbed of all authority and support, and received from the court only empty words by way of answer. The Regent, by endeavouring to satisfy all parties, had displeased all.

While this happened between the Court, the Councils and the States, a universal spirit of revolt pervaded the whole nation. They began to scrutinise the rights of the subject and to investigate the power of kings. "The Netherlanders were not so imbecile," many were heard to say, and not very

secretly, "as not to know right well, what was due from the subject to the Sovereign, and from the king to the subject; and that, perhaps, means would yet be discovered, to repel force with force, although there might be no appearance of it at present."— In Antwerp, a placard was even found in several places affixed, in which the town council was called upon — to accuse the king of Spain before the supreme court at Spire, because he had broken his oath and violated the liberties of the country in as much as Brabant, being a portion of the Burgundian Circle, was comprehended in the religious peace of Passau and Augsburg. About this very time the Calvinists published their confession of faith, and declared in a preamble, which was addressed to the king, that they, although they were a hundred thousand strong, kept themselves, nevertheless, quiet, and, like the rest, contributed to all the taxes of the country; from which it was evident, they added, that they entertained no ideas of insurrection. Bold and incendiary writings were distributed amongst the public, which depicted the Spanish tyranny in the most odious colours, and reminded the nation of its privileges and occasionally also of its powers. *)

The warlike preparations of Philip against the

*) The Regent mentioned to the king a number of 3000 of these writings. Strada 117. It is remarkable how important a part printing and publicity in general played in the rebellion of the Nether-

Porte, as likewise those which Eric, Duke of Brunswick, about this time made in the vicinity (no one knew why) contributed to strengthen the general suspicion, that the Inquisition was forcibly to be imposed on the Netherlands. Many of the most eminent merchants already spoke loudly of quitting their houses and possessions, in order to seek in some other part of the world the liberty, which was here torn from them; others looked about for a leader, and let fall hints of forcible resistance and of foreign aid.

In order that the Regent might be left in this distressing position of affairs entirely without an adviser and without support, she was now further to be deserted by the only person, who was at the present moment indispensable to her, and who had contributed to plunge her into this embarrassment. "Without kindling a civil war," wrote to her William of Orange, "it was now absolutely impossible to comply with the orders of the king. If, however, it was, notwithstanding, insisted upon, he must beg, that his place might be supplied by another, who would answer the objects of his Majesty better, and have more power,

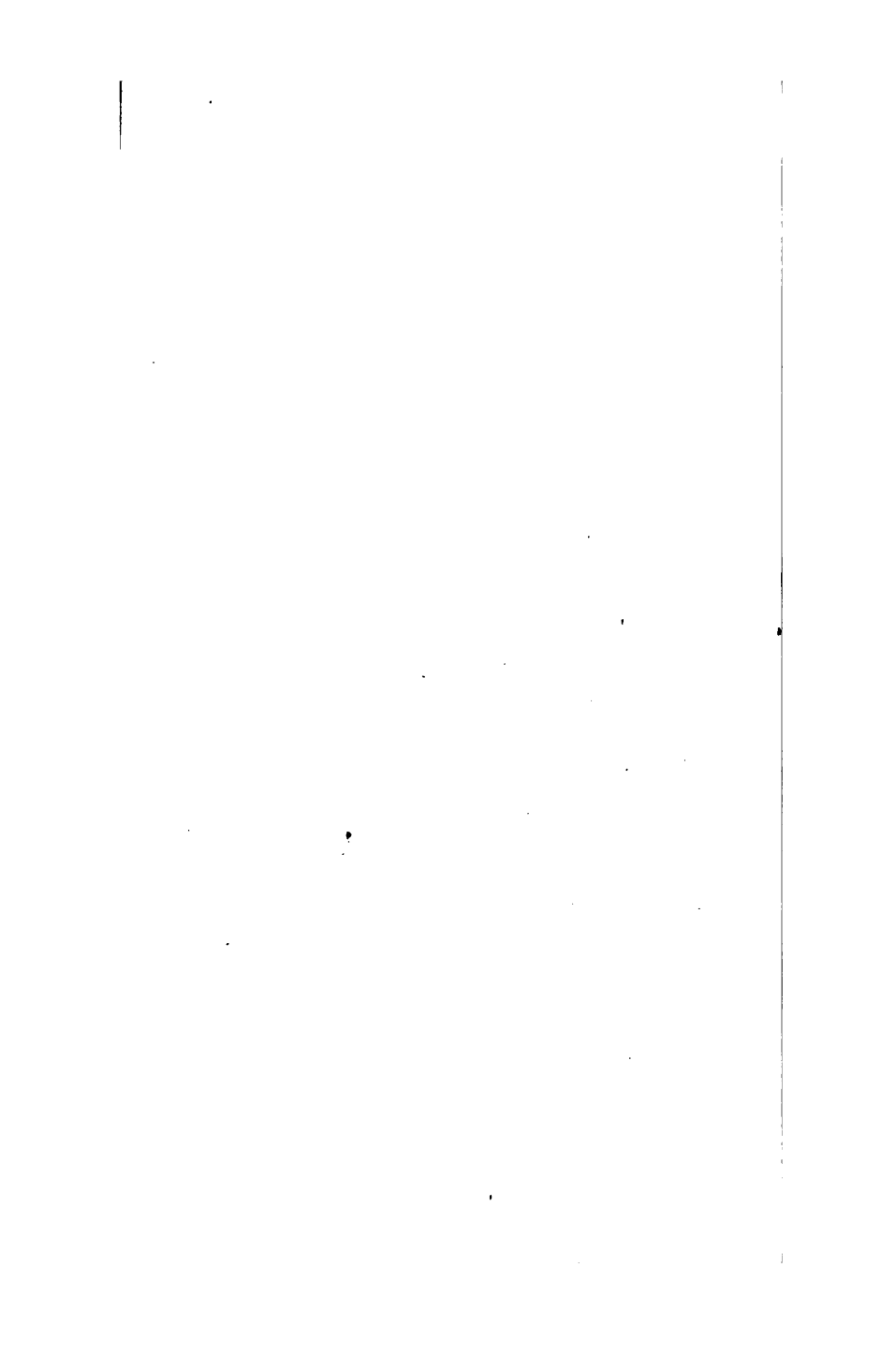
lands. Through this organ one restless spirit spoke to millions. Amongst the lampoons, which for the most part were composed with all the lowness, scurrility and brutality, which was the distinguishing character of most of the Protestant polemical writings of that time, there were published also at times books, which defended religious liberty in the fullest sense of the word.

than he had, over the minds of the nation. The zeal, which he had on every other occasion shewn in the service of the crown, would, he hoped, secure his present step from every injurious interpretation; for, as the case now stood, there remained to him no alternative, but either to disobey the king, or to act to the injury of his country and himself." From this time forth William of Orange retired from the Council of State, to betake himself to his town of Breda, where in observant repose, but hardly quite inactive, he watched the unravelling of affairs. The Count of Hoorn followed his example; only Egmont ever vacillating between the Republic and the throne, ever wearying himself in the vain attempt, to unite the good citizen with the obedient subject; Egmont who could less dispense with the favour of the monarch and to whom it was therefore less an object of indifference, could not bring himself, to abandon the seeds of his fortune, which now stood in full bloom at the court of the Regent. The withdrawal of the Prince of Orange, to whom as well necessity, as his superior intellect gave all the influence over the Regent, which great minds cannot fail of attaining over inferior spirits, had opened a void in her confidence, of which Count Egmont by virtue of the sympathy, which is very easily established between the weaknesses of timidity and good nature, took unlimited possession. As she was as much afraid of exasperat-

ing the people by an exclusive confidence in the adherents of the crown, as she was fearful of displeasing the king by too close an understanding with the declared leaders of the faction, a better object for her confidence could now hardly be presented, than this very Count Egmont of whom it was not properly so clearly decided to which of the two parties he belonged.



THIRD BOOK.



CONSPIRACY OF THE NOBLES.

(1565) Hitherto, it appears, the general peace had been the sincere wish of the Prince of Orange, the Counts of Egmont and Hoorn and their friends. The true interest of the King their sovereign, had guided them quite as much as the general weal; their exertions at least and their actions had been as little at variance with the former as with the latter. Nothing had as yet occurred, which made their objects suspicious, or which manifested in them the spirit of rebellion. What they had done, they had done as bounden members of a free state, as the representatives and voice of the nation, as advisers of the King, as men of integrity and honor. The weapons, with which they opposed the encroachments of the court, had been representations, modest complaints, petitions. They had never allowed themselves to be so far carried away by the most just zeal, for their good cause, as to belie prudence and moderation, which on other occasions are so easily overstepped by party spirit. But not all the nobles of the Republic listened to the

voice of that prudence, all did not abide within the bounds of moderation.

While in the Council of State the great question was discussed whether the nation was to be miserable, or not, while its sworn advocates (summoned to their assistance) all the arguments of reason and of equity, and while the middle classes and the people however vented themselves in empty complaints, menaces and curses, a part of the nation set itself in motion, which appeared least of all called thereto, and which had been least calculated upon. Let us call to mind that class of the nobility, of whom it was mentioned above, that Philip at his accession to the throne had not considered it necessary, to remember their services and wants. By far the greatest number of these had waited for promotion from a much more urgent reason than on account of mere honor. Many among them were in the way, which we have touched upon above, sunk deeply in debts from which they could not hope to emancipate themselves through their own means. When Philip passed over them in filling up appointments, he injured something far worse than their pride; in these beggars he had raised up just so many idle observers and merciless judges of his actions, just so many malicious collectors and propagators of innovation. As, with their prosperity their pride did not quit them, so now driven by necessity they trafficked with the sole capital, which could

not be alienated, with their nobility and with the republican importance of their names, and brought into circulation a coin, which at such a period only, or in none could pass current — their protection. With a self-pride, to which they gave so much the more scope, because it was their sole possession, they now looked upon themselves as the important intermediate power between the Sovereign and the citizen, and believed themselves called upon to hasten to the aid of the oppressed Republic, which looked impatiently towards them, as to its last support. This idea was only so far ridiculous, as their self conceit was concerned in it; but the advantages, which they contrived to draw from this opinion were substantial enough. The Protestant Merchants, in whose hands was a great part of the wealth of the Netherlands, and who believed they could not purchase the undisturbed exercise of their religion too dearly at any price, did not fail to make the only possible use of this class of people, who stood idle at the market, and whom no one had hired. These very men upon whom at any other time they would perhaps have looked down with the pride of riches, could now through their numbers, their courage, their credit with the populace, their enmity to the government, nay, through their beggarly pride itself and their despair, do them very good service. On these grounds they employed themselves zealously, in uniting most closely with them, in diligently fostering in them

the disposition for rebellion, in keeping alive in them these high opinions of themselves, and what was most important, in hiring their poverty through well applied pecuniary assistance and glittering promises. Few of them were so utterly insignificant, as not to possess some influence, if it were even only through relationship with higher nobles, and all together, if they succeeded in uniting them, could raise a formidable voice against the crown. Many of them already belonged to the new sect, or were at least inclined to it in secret; but those among them, who were zealous catholics, had political or private grounds enough, to declare themselves against the decrees of Trent and the Inquisition. All, in fine, were sufficiently called upon through their vanity alone, not to allow the only moment to escape them, in which they might possibly make some figure in the Republic.

But much as might be expected from the combination of these men, it would have been groundless and ridiculous to base any hopes whatever on any single one among them; and it was not so very easy to effect this combination. Only to bring them together, it was requisite that some unusual circumstances should occur; and fortunately such circumstances did happen. The nuptials of Baron Montigny one of the Netherlandish nobles, as also those of the Prince Alexander of Parma, which took place about this time in Brussels, assembled in that town a great

part of the nobility of the Netherlands. On this occasion relations met relations; new friendships were formed and old renewed; the universal distress of the country was the topic of conversation; wine and mirth unlocked lips and hearts; hints were dropped of fraternisation, of an alliance with foreign powers. These accidental meetings soon brought about designed ones; from public discussions arose secret consultations. It happened, that about this time two German barons, a Count of Holle and of Schwarzenberg were stopping in the Netherlands, who omitted nothing to awaken high expectations of neighbourly assistance. Some time before, Count Louis of Nassau had personally managed similar negotiations at several German Courts. *) Some even will have that they saw secret emissaries of the Admiral Coligny about this time in Brabant, which however may be reasonably doubted.

If ever a political crisis was favourable to the attempt at a change, it was this. A woman at the helm of government; the governors of provinces disaffected and disposed to wink at what was done; some State Counsellors entirely inefficient; no army in the provinces; the few troops there were, already long discontented on

*) And it was not in vain also that the Prince of Orange so suddenly disappeared from Brussels in order to be present at the election of a king of Rome in Frankfort. An Assembly of so many German princes must have greatly favoured a negotiation.

account of the withholding of their pay, and too often already deceived by false promises, to allow themselves to be enticed by new; those troops moreover commanded by officers, who despised the Inquisition from their hearts, and would have blushed, only to draw their swords for it; no money in the treasury, to enlist new troops with sufficient speed, and just as little to hire foreigners. The Court at Brussels, as well as the three Councils, divided by internal dissensions and corrupted by immorality; the Regent without full powers, and the King far removed; his adherents in the provinces few, uncertain and dispirited; the faction numerous and powerful; two thirds of the people irritated against popery and desirous of a change — what an unfortunate weakness of the government, and how much more unfortunate still, that this weakness was so well known to its enemies!

In order to unite so many minds to one object, there was still wanting a leader and a few influential names to give weight in the Republic to their enterprise. Both were found in Count Louis of Nassau, and Henry Brederode, both belonging to the most illustrious nobility of the country, who voluntarily placed themselves at the head of the undertaking. Louis of Nassau, brother of the Prince of Orange, united many splendid qualities, which made him worthy to appear on so important a stage. In Geneva, where he studied, he had imbibed his hatred to the hierarchy and his love to the new religion,

and on his return had not failed to enlist proselytes to these opinions in his native country. The Republican impulse, which his mind had received in that school, maintained in him an ardent detestation of all, that bore the name of Spanish, which animated all his actions and left him only with his latest breath. Popery and Spanish rule were in his mind but one and the same subject, as indeed they were in reality, and the abhorrence, which he entertained for the one, helped to strengthen his dislike to the other. Closely as the brothers agreed in their inclinations and dislikes, the ways were dissimilar, by which they sought to gratify both. The hot blood of temperament and youth did not allow the younger brother the sinuosities, through which the elder wound himself towards his object. A cold sedate glance conducted the latter slowly, but surely to his aim; a pliable subtility made things subservient to his purpose; the other through a fool-hardy impetuosity, which overthrew all before it, at times compelled success, but oftener accelerated disaster. For this reason William was a General, and Louis never more than an adventurer; a sure and powerful arm, if governed by a wise head. Louis' pledge once given was good for ever; his alliances survived every vicissitude, because they were formed in the pressing moment of necessity, and because misfortune binds more firmly than thoughtless joy. He loved his brother, as he did his cause, and for this latter he died.

Henry of Brederode, Baron of Viane, and Burgrave of Utrecht, drew his descent from the old Dutch Counts, who formerly ruled that province as sovereign princes. So important a title made him dear to the people, among whom the memory of their former lords lived still unforgotten and was valued the more highly, the less they felt they had gained by the change. This hereditary lustre aided the selfconceit of a man, who had the glory of his ancestors continually on his tongue, and moved so much the more fondly among the fallen ruins of their former greatness, the more disconsolate the glance was, which he cast upon his present condition. Shut out from all the honors and employments, to which his high opinion of himself, and the nobility of his race, appeared to give him a well grounded claim (a squadron of light cavalry was all which was entrusted to him) he detested the government and did not scruple to assail its measures with bold revilings. Through this he won to himself the people. He favoured also in secret the evangelical belief; less however, because his better conviction decided for it than rather simply because it was a secession. He had more loquacity, than eloquence, and more audacity than courage, he was brave, but more, because he did not believe in danger, than because he was superior to it. Louis of Nassau burned for the cause, which he defended, Brederode for the glory, of being its defender; the former was

satisfied in acting for his party; the latter must stand at its head. No one was more fit to lead off the dance in a rebellion, but it could hardly have a worse director. Contemptible as his menaces really were, the illusion of the multitude might have imparted to them weight and terror, if it had occurred to them to set up a pretender in his person. His claim upon the possessions of his ancestors was an empty name; but even a name was now sufficient for the general disaffection. A pamphlet, which was then disseminated amongst the people, openly called him the heir of Holland, and an engraving, which was exhibited of him, bore the boastful inscription:

Sum Brederodus ego, Batavae non infima gentis.

Gloria, virtutem non vinca pagina claudit.

(1565) Besides these two there were also, from the most illustrious of the Netherlandish nobility, the young Count Charles of Mansfeld, a son of that nobleman, whom we have found among the most zealous royalists, the Count of Kinlemburg, two Counts of Bergen and of Battenburg, John of Marnix, Baron of Thoulouse, Philip of Marnix, Baron of St. Aldegonde with several others, who joined the league, which was entered into about the middle of November in the year 1565 in the house of a certain, Von Hammes, King at arms of the Golden Fleece. Six men here decided the destiny of their country, (as those confederates formerly did the liberty of Switzerland) kindled the torch of a forty years war, and laid the

basis of a freedom of which themselves were never to reap the advantage. The objects of the league were contained in the following form of oath, to which Philip of Marnix was the first to subscribe his name. "Whereas certain ill disposed persons, under the mask of a pious zeal, but in reality only from the impulse of their avarice and lust of power, have wrongly persuaded the King, our most gracious Sovereign, to introduce into these countries the abominable tribunal of the Inquisition (a tribunal, which is diametrically opposed to all laws human and divine and which outstrips in inhumanity all the barbarous institutions of blind heathenism, which subjects every other power to the Inquisitors, which abases men to a perpetual bondage, and through its snares exposes the honest citizen to a constant fear of death, in as much as it is open to any such person as a priest, a faithless friend, a Spaniard, or reprobate fellow, to cause, whenever he pleases whomsoever he will, to be accused before that tribunal, to be placed in confinement, condemned and executed, without the latter being allowed, to know his accuser, or to adduce proof of his innocence); we, therefore, the undersigned, have bound ourselves to watch over the safety of our families, our estates and our own persons. We pledge and unite ourselves by a sacred fraternisation to this end, and vow with a solemn oath, to oppose to the best of our power the introduction of this tribunal into these countries, whether

it be attempted openly or secretly, and under whatever name it may be attempted. We declare at the same time, that we are far from thereby intending anything unlawful against the King, our Sovereign; it is rather the unalterable purpose of us all to support and defend his royal government, to maintain peace and to keep down as far as we can, all rebellion. In accordance with this purpose we have sworn and now again swear, to hold sacred the government, and to guard it in word and deed, which witness Almighty God!

We further vow and swear to protect and defend ourselves mutually, one the other, in all times, and places, against all attacks, whatever they may be, as concerns the Articles, which are set forth in this covenant. We hereby bind ourselves, that no accusation of our pursuit, in whatever name it may be clothed, whether it be called rebellion, sedition or otherwise, shall have the power to annul our oath towards him, who is accused, or absolve us from our obligation toward him. No action, which is directed against the Inquisition, can deserve the name of a rebellion. Whoever, therefore, shall be placed in arrest on account of any such cause, him, we here pledge ourselves, to assist, according to our ability, and again to effect his liberation through every allowable means. There, as in all other rules for our conduct, but especially against the tribunal of the Inquisition, we submit ourselves to the general opinion of the league, or also to the de-

cision of those, whom we unanimously name our Counsellors and leaders.

In witness of this and in confirmation of this league, we call upon the holy name of the living God, Creator of Heaven and earth, and of all things, which are therein, who searches the hearts, the consciences and the thoughts, and knows the purity of ours. We implore the aid of his holy spirit, that success and honor may crown our undertaking to the glory of His name and to the blessing and perpetual peace of our native country!

This covenant was immediately translated into several languages and quickly disseminated through the Provinces. Every one of the confederates brought together, whatever friends, relations, adherents and retainers he had, in order to swell the league as speedily as possible. Great banquets were held which lasted whole days, — irresistible temptations for a kind of sensual, cupidinous people, with whom the deepest wretchedness could not stifle the propensity for voluptuous living. Whoever repaired thither, and every one was welcome, was plied with officious assurances of friendship, heated with wine, carried away by example, and overcome by the fire of a wild eloquence. The hands of many were guided to the signature, the hesitating were chidden, the pusillanimous threatened, the loyally disposed overclamoured; some among them were entirely ignorant, what it properly was, to which they had signed their names, and were ashamed to inquire, for the first time, long after-

wards. The general enthusiasm left no choice open; mere levity brought many to the party, the splendour of the confederacy allured the mean, its great numbers gave heart to the timorous. They had employed the artifice of falsely counterfeiting the names and seals of the Prince of Orange, the Counts of Egmont, Hoorn, Megen and others, a trick which won hundreds to the league. This was done especially with a view to the officers of the army, in order in any case to protect themselves in this quarter, if it should come to acts of violence. It succeeded with many, especially with subalterns, and Count Brederode even drew his sword upon an ensign, who wished time for consideration. Men of all classes and conditions signed it. Religion made no difference, Catholic priests themselves were associated in the league. The motives were not the same with all, but the pretext was similar. The Catholics desired simply the abolition of the Inquisition, and mitigation of the Edicts; the Protestants aimed at unlimited freedom of conscience. A few daring spirits entertained no less a project, than the utter overthrow of the present government, and the most indigent among them based their vile hopes on the general anarchy. A farewell entertainment, which about this very time was given to the Counts of Schwarzenberg and Holle in Breda, and shortly afterwards in Hogstraten, drew many of the first nobility to both places, amongst whom were se-

veral who had already subscribed the covenant. The Prince of Orange also, the Counts of Egmont, Hoorn and Megen were present at this banquet, but without any preconcerted design, and without having themselves any share in the league, although one of Egmont's own secretaries and some of the servants of the other nobles in question had openly joined it. At this banquet three hundred persons declared themselves for the covenant, and the question was mooted whether they should present themselves before the Regent armed or without arms, with a declaration, or with a petition? Hoorn and Orange (Egmont would not countenance the undertaking in any way) were called upon as arbiters therein, and they decided for the more moderate and submissive mode by which, however, they exposed themselves to the accusation, of having in no very covert manner given their protection to the enterprise of the confederates. It was determined, therefore, to present their address unarmed and in the form of a petition, and a day was appointed, on which they should assemble in Brussels.

The first intimation of this conspiracy of the nobles was given to the Regent by the Count of Megen soon after his return. "There was," he said, "an enterprise on foot; 300 of the nobles were implicated in it; it referred to religion; the members of it had bound themselves by an oath; they reckoned much on foreign aid; she would soon know more about it." He said no more to

her, however urgently she pressed him. "A nobleman had confided it to him under the seal of secrecy, and he had pledged his word of honor to him." It was in reality, perhaps, less this delicacy about his honor, which restrained him from farther explanation, than rather his dislike to the Inquisition, to which he would not willingly do a service. Soon after him Count Egmont delivered to the Regent a copy of the covenant, wherein he named to her the names also of the Conspirators with the exception of some few. Nearly about the same time the Prince of Orange wrote to her: "there was, as he had heard, an army enlisted, 400 officers were already named, and 20,000 men would presently appear in arms." Thus the rumour was intentionally exaggerated through continual new additions, and the danger received an increase in every mouth.

The Regent petrified at the first alarm of these tidings and guided by nothing but her fears, called in all haste together, whatever members of the Council of State were at that time in Brussels, and at the same time invited by a pressing summons the Prince of Orange and the Count of Hoorn to resume their places in the Senate, which they had abandoned. Before the latter arrived, she consulted with Egmont, Megen and Barlaumont what was to be determined on in this perilous position of affairs. The question was, whether it would be better to have recourse to arms, or

to yield to the emergency and grant the confederates their demands, or whether they should be put off with promises and an appearance of compliance, until time had been gained, to send for instructions from Spain and provide money and troops? For the first plan the requisite money was wanting and the equally requisite confidence in the army, which, perhaps, had been already gained by the conspirators. The second would never be sanctioned by the king and also serve rather, to raise than depress the courage of the confederates; as on the contrary a reasonable pliability, and a ready, unconditional pardon of what had happened would perhaps stifle the rebellion in the cradle. The last opinion was supported by Megen and Egmont, but opposed by Barlaimont. "Rumour had exaggerated the matter," said the latter, "it was impossible that so formidable an armament could have taken place so secretly and with such rapidity. It was the congregating of a few worthless persons, instigated by two or three enthusiasts, nothing more. All would be quiet after a few heads were struck off." The Regent determined to await the opinion of the United Council of State; in the meanwhile, however, she did not remain inactive. The fortifications in the most important places were inspected, and repaired where they had suffered injury; her ambassadors at foreign courts received orders to redouble their vigilance; expresses were sent off to Spain. At the same time she exerted herself to bring into circulation afresh, the report

of the near advent of the king, and to show in her external deportment the firmness and the imperturbability, which awaits attack and has not the appearance of succumbing to it.

At the end of March, consequently four whole months after the framing of the covenant, the whole State Council assembled in Brussels. There were present, the Prince of Orange, the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Egmont, Bergen, Megen, Arenberg, Hoorn, Hogstraten, Barlaimont and others, the Barons of Montigny and Hachicourt, all the knights of the golden Fleece, with the President Viglius, State Counsellor Bruxelles, and the other Assessors of the Privy Council. Here several letters were produced, which gave nearer insight into the plan of the conspiracy. The extremity, in which the Regent found herself, gave the disaffected an importance, of which they did not neglect to avail themselves on the present occasion and to vent their long suppressed soreness in words. They permitted themselves bitter complaints against the Court itself and against the Government. "But lately", it was thus the Prince of Orange expressed himself, "the king sent 40,000 gold florins to the Queen of Scotland, to support her in her undertakings against England — and he allows his Netherlands to be overwhelmed with their debt. But not once to mention the unseasonableness of this subsidy and its bad result, why does he awaken the resentment of a

Queen against us, who is so important to us as a friend, but so much to be dreaded as an enemy?" — On this occasion too, the Prince could not refrain from glancing at the concealed hatred, which the king was supposed to cherish against the family of Nassau, and against him in particular. "It is well known," he said, "that he has plotted with the hereditary enemies of my house, to make away with me by some means or other and that he waits with impatience only for the pretence thereto." His example opened the lips of the Count of Hoorn also, and many others besides, who descanted with passionate vehemence on their own merits and the ingratitude of the king. The Regent had difficulty in silencing the tumult and in restoring attention to the proper subject of the debate. The question was, whether the confederates, of whom it was now known, that they would present themselves at Court with a petition, should be admitted or not? The Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Arembërg, of Megen and Barlaimont opposed it. "Wherefore 500 persons," said the latter, "in order to deliver a small memorial? This paradox of humility and defiance implies no good. Let them send to us one respectable man from among their number, without pomp, without assumption, and in this manner submit their application to us. Otherwise shut the gates upon them, or if it is insisted on admitting them, let them be watched most rigidly, and let the first insolent act, of which one of

them may be guilty, be punished with death.” The Count of Mansfeld, whose own son was among the conspirators, declared himself against their party; he had threatened his son with being disinherited, if he did not renounce the league.

The Counts of Megen also and Aremberg hesitated about receiving the petition; the Prince of Orange, however, the Counts of Egmont, Hoorn, Hogstraten and others voted emphatically for it. “The confederates,” they declared, “were known to them as men of integrity and honor; a great part of them were connected with them by friendship, and relationship, and they dared vouch for their behaviour. To give in a petition was allowed to every subject; without injustice a right could not be denied to so respectable a body of men, which was possessed by the meanest individual in the State.” It was resolved, therefore, since the majority of votes were for this opinion, to admit the confederates, it being previously understood that they should appear unarmed and conduct themselves temperately. The squabbles of the members of Council had taken up the greatest part of the time, so that it was necessary to adjourn the farther discussion to a second meeting, which was opened immediately on the following day. In order that the principal matter in debate might not, as happened the day before, be lost sight of in useless complaints, the Regent this time at once hastened to the point. “Brederode,” she said, “is coming

to us, as our reports tell us, with an address in the name of the league, calling for the abolition of the Inquisition and mitigation of the Edicts. The decree of my Senate is to guide me in my answer to him; but before you give your opinions, permit me to premise a few words. I am told that there are many, even amongst you yourselves, who attack the religious Edicts of the Emperor, my father, with open reproaches, and depict them to the people as inhuman and barbarous. Now I ask you yourselves, knights of the Fleece, Counsellors of His Majesty and of the State, whether you did not yourselves vote for these Edicts, whether the States of the realm have not recognised them as lawful? Why is that now blamed, which was formerly declared right? Is it because they have now become more necessary than they then were? Since when is the Inquisition in the Netherlands so unusual a thing? Did not the Emperor establish it now sixteen years ago? And wherein is it more cruel than the Edicts? If it is allowed, that these last were the work of wisdom, if the universal consent of the States has sanctioned them — why this opposition to the former, which is nevertheless far more humane than the Edicts, if these are observed to the letter? Speak now freely, I am not desirous of fettering your decision; but it is your business, to see that it is not guided by passion.” The Council of State was, as it always was, divided between two opinions; but the few,

who spoke for the Inquisition and the literal execution of the Edicts were far outvoted by the opposite party, of which the Prince of Orange was the leader. "Would to heaven," he began, "that my representations had been thought worthy of consideration, so long as they were still remote apprehensions, things would then have never been carried so far, as to have recourse to extreme measures, nor would men have sunk deeper in the error, in which they live, through the very means, which have been applied to bring them forth from those errors. We all, as you see, are unanimous in the main object in view. We all wish to see the catholic religion out of danger; if this can be accomplished without the aid of the Inquisition, good, we offer wealth and blood to its service; but that, as you hear, is the very point on which the most of us think directly opposite."

"There are two kinds of Inquisition: the See of Rome lays claim to the one, the other has been exercised from time immemorial by the Bishops. The force of prejudice and of custom, has made the latter light and supportable to us. It will find little opposition in the Netherlands, and the augmented numbers of the Bishops will make it effective. Wherefore, then, the first, the mere mention of which is revolting to all the feelings of the mind? When so many nations exist without it, why should we be the precise persons, on whom it is to be imposed. Before

Luther no one was acquainted with it; but this happened at a time, when there was a want of spiritual overseers, the few Bishops shewed themselves besides indolent, and the licentiousness of the clergy excluded them from the office of judges. Now all is changed; we now count as many Bishops as there are provinces. Why should not the policy of the government accompany the times? We want leniency not severity. We see the repugnance of the people, which we must seek to appease, if we would not have it degenerate into rebellion. With the death of Pius the 4th the full powers of the Inquisitors have expired; the new Pope has as yet sent no ratification of their authority, without which formerly no one ventured to exercise his office. Now, therefore, is the time when it can be suspended without infringing the rights of any one.

What I have stated with regard to the Inquisition holds good also with regard to the Edicts. The exigency of the times called them forth, but are not those times passed? So long an experience ought at last to have taught us, that against heresy no means is less successful, than the faggot and the sword. What incredible progress has not the new religion made in the Provinces during only the last few years, and if we investigate the causes of this increase, we shall find them in the glorious constancy, of those who have fallen as its sacrifices. Carried away by sympathy and by admiration one begins secretly to conjecture, that it may indeed

be Truth, which is maintained with such invincible courage. In France and in England, the Protestants have been made to suffer the same severities, but has it been with any better success there than here? The very earliest Christians boasted that the blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church. The Emperor Julian, the most terrible enemy, that Christianity ever experienced, was penetrated with this truth. Convinced, that persecution did but the more kindle enthusiasm, he betook himself to ridicule and derision, and found these weapons far more powerful, than force. In the Greek Empire various sects have arisen at various times. Arius under Constantine, Aetius under Constantius, Nestorius under Theodosius, never, however, has it been seen, that punishments have been used either against these arch heretics themselves or against their disciples equal to those which depopulate our country— and where are all those sects gone to, which, I had almost said, an entire world could not contain? But this is the course of heresy. If it is overlooked with contempt, it crumbles into insignificance. It is an iron, which if it lies idle, corrodes, and only becomes sharp by use. Let the eye be withdrawn from it, and it loses its most powerful attraction, the magic of what is new and what is forbidden. Why will we not content ourselves with measures, which were approved of by such great Rulers? Examples will prove our surest guide.


But to what purpose examples from pagan an-

tiquity, when the glorious one of Charles the 5th, the greatest of kings, lies before us, who at last overcome by so many experiences, quitted the bloody path of persecution, and for many years before his abdication went over to mild measures. Philip himself, our most gracious Sovereign, appeared firmly to incline to leniency; the counsels of a Granvella and of others like him, taught him to alter these views; with what right, they may settle with themselves. It has, however, always appeared to me, that laws must assimilate with the manners and the maxims of the times to be crowned with success. In conclusion, I bring to your recollection the close understanding, which exists between the Huguenots and the Flemish Protestants. Let us beware of exasperating them further, than may have been done as yet. Let us not act the part of French Catholics towards them, in order that it may not occur to them, to play the Huguenots against us, and like the latter plunge their country into the horrors of a civil war.”*)

It was perhaps not so much the truth and incontrovertibility of his arguments, which were supported by the most decisive majority in the Senate, as rather the ruinous state of the military

*) No one need wonder, says Burgundius, (a vehement stickler for the Catholic religion and the Spanish party) that so much acquaintance with Philosophy is evinced in the speech of this Prince he; had gained it from his intercourse with Balduin. 180. Bary 174-178. Hopper 72. Strada 123. 124.

resources and the exhaustion of the treasury, which prevented the carrying through the opposite opinion by force of arms, which the Prince of Orange had to thank, for his representations this time not remaining entirely without effect. In order, at least, to avert the first storm and to gain the necessary time, to be placed in a better state of preparation against them, it was agreed to accord to the Confederates a portion of their demands. It was resolved to mitigate the penal statutes of the Emperor, as he would himself mitigate them, if he was again to appear at that day — as he once did not think it derogatory to his dignity to mitigate them himself, under similar circumstances. The Inquisition should not be introduced, where it had not been already, and where it had been, it should be placed on a milder footing; or even be entirely suspended, as the Inquisitors (so it was expressed in order not to give the Protestants the small gratification, of knowing themselves to be dreaded, or that their application was acknowledged to be just) had not yet been confirmed by the new Pope. The Privy council was commissioned to draw out this decree of the Senate without delay. Thus prepared, the confederates were awaited.



THE GEUSEN.

The Senate had not yet been dispersed, when all Brussels resounded with the report, that the confederates were approaching the town. They consisted of only two hundred horse, but rumour exaggerated their numbers. The Regent, filled with consternation, proposed the question, whether the gates should be closed on the approaching party, or whether they should save themselves by flight? Both suggestions were rejected as dishonorable; and the peaceable entry of the nobles soon contradicted the fear of a forcible surprise. The first morning after their arrival they assembled in Kuilemburg house, where Brederode administered to them a second oath, to the effect that they bound themselves to stand by one another, to the postponement of all their other duties, and with arms, even, if required. Here also a letter from Spain was shewn to them, in which it was stated, that a certain Protestant, whom they all knew and valued, had been burned alive in that country by a slow fire. After these and similar preliminaries he called on them one after another

by name and made them take the new oath and renew the old one in their own names and in those of the absent. The very next day, the 5th of April 1566 was fixed for the presentation of the petition. Their numbers were now between 300 and 400. Amongst them were many retainers of the high nobility, as also several servants of the King himself, and of the Dutchess.

With the Counts of Nassau and Brederode at their head, they advanced in procession in ranks of four and four to the Palace; all Brussels attended the unwonted spectacle in silent astonishment. Here were seen persons, who came forward with too much boldness and confidence to appear supplicants, led by two men who were not wont to be seen as petitioners; on the other hand so much order, so much stillness as is not usually seen to consort with rebellion. The Regent received the procession, surrounded by all her Councillors and the knights of the Fleece. "These noble Netherlanders," thus Brederode respectfully addressed her, "who here present themselves assembled before your Highness; and many others besides, who are shortly to arrive, wish to present to you a petition, of the importance of which, as also of their humility, this solemn procession will convince you. I, as speaker of this body, entreat you, to receive this petition, which contains nothing, which is not in unison with the welfare of our country and with the King's honor."

"If this petition," replied Margaret, "really

contains nothing which is at variance with the good of the country and with the authority of the King, there is no doubt, that it will be granted.” “They had learnt,” continued the Spokesman, “with indignation and regret, that suspicious objects had been imputed to their association, and that Her Highness had been prejudiced against them, they would therefore crave that she would name to them the authors of so grave an accusation, and constrain such persons to make their charges with all due form and publicly, in order that he, who should be found guilty, might suffer the punishment of his demerits!” — “Indubitably,” answered the Regent, “she could not be blamed, if in consequence of the unfavourable rumours of their designs and alliances, she had thought it requisite to call the attention of the Governors of the Provinces to the subject; but she would never name to them the authors of this information; to betray State secrets,” she added with an appearance of displeasure “could not be with any justice required of her.” She then appointed the next day to the confederates, for them to come and receive the answer to their petition, over which she now once again proceeded to consult with the knights.

“Never” (so run this petition, which according to some was drawn up by the celebrated Balduin) “never had they permitted themselves to fail in their loyalty to their King and they were now also far from doing so; but they would rather run

the risk of incurring the displeasure of their Sovereign, than allow him to remain longer in ignorance of the evil consequences, which threatened their native country through the forcible introduction of the Inquisition and continued perseverance in the Edicts. They had long tranquilised themselves with the hope, that a general assembly of the States would remedy these grievances; now, however, that this hope also was extinguished they held it to be their duty to give the Regent timely warning. They, therefore, entreated Her Highness, to send a well intentioned and well advised person to Madrid, who might persuade the King in compliance with the universal demands of the nation to abolish the Inquisition, to annul the Edicts, and in their stead to cause new and more humane ones to be drawn up at a general assembly of the States. In the meanwhile, however, until the King had acquainted them with his decision they prayed that the Edicts might be suspended and the Inquisition placed out of operation. "If", they concluded, "no attention was paid to their humble request, they took God, the King, the Regent and all her Counsellors to witness, that they had done their part, should any unfortunate result happen".

The following day the confederates appeared in the same order of procession, but in still greater numbers (the Counts of Bergen and Kuilemburg had in the interim joined them with their adherents) before the Regent, in order to receive her reso-

lution. This was written on the margin of the petition and was to the effect ; "that to cause the Inquisition and the Edicts to be entirely suspended did not lie in her power ; but she would according to the wish of the confederates, despatch to Spain one of the nobles, and support their request with the King with all her influence. Meantime the Inquisitors should be recommended to administer their office with moderation ; but in return she expected from the League that they would keep themselves from all acts of violence, and undertake nothing against the Catholic faith." Little as these general and vague promises satisfied the confederates, they were nevertheless all, that they could have at first expected with any appearance of probability. The granting or not granting of the petition, had nothing to do with the particular aim of the League. Enough for them at present, that it was once well established ; that now something was provided, by which, as often as it was necessary the government might be placed in awe. The Confederates, therefore, acted in accordance with their plan, in contenting themselves with this answer, and allowing the rest to depend upon the decision of the King. As, indeed, the whole pantomime of this petition had been only invented, to cover behind this supplicants garb the more daring plan of the League, until it had attained sufficient strength to shew itself in its true light ; so they must have felt that much more depended on the tenability of

this mask, and much more on the favourable reception of their petition, than on its being speedily granted. They pressed, therefore, in a new memorial, which they delivered three days after, for an express testimonial from the Regent, that they had done no more than their duty, and been guided simply by their zeal for the service of the King. When the Dutchess evaded a declaration, they even sent a person to her from the stairs, who was to repeat this request to her. "Time alone and their future behaviour," she replied to this person, "would be the judges of their designs." The League had its origin in banquets, and a banquet gave it form and perfection. On the same day, on which the second petition was presented, Brederode entertained the confederates in Kuilemburg house; about 300 guests were assembled; intoxication raised their spirits, and their courage rose with their numbers. Here some of them called to their recollection, that they had heard the Count of Barlaimont whisper in French to the Regent, who was seen to turn pale on the delivery of the petitions, that "she should not be afraid of a band of beggars (*gueux*)."

In fact the majority of them through a bad management of their incomes had fallen so far, that they had only too well justified this appellation. While a name for their fraternity was precisely the very thing which perplexed them, this expression was eagerly caught up, which cloaked

the presumption of their enterprise in humility and which at the same time was least removed from truth. Immediately they drank to one another under this name and: "long live the Geusen!" was the cry with a general shout of applause. After the cloth had been removed, Brederode appeared with a wallet, like that which vagrant pilgrims and mendicant monks at that time carried, hung it round his neck, drank the health of the whole company out of a wooden beaker, returned thanks to all for their accession to the League, and boldly promised, that he stood ready to venture life and limb for every individual among them. All united in a similar exclamation, the beaker went round, and each uttered the same vow, as he set it to his lips. Then one after the other they received the beggar's purse, and each hung it on a nail, which he had appropriated to himself. The noise caused by this buffoonery, drew the Prince of Orange, and the Counts of Egmont and Hoorn, whom chance at the very moment, conducted to the spot into the house, where Brederode, as host, boisterously pressed them to remain and drink a glass with them. *)

*) "But", subsequently asserted Egmont in his written defence, "we drank only one single small glass, and thereupon they cried: 'long live the King and the Geusen!'" This was the first time that I heard that appellation, and it certainly did not please me. But the times were so bad, that one was compelled so share in doing much against his inclination, and I thought I was doing an innocent thing." *Procès criminels des comtes d'Egmont etc.* 7. 1. Egmont's defence Hopper 94. Strada 127 — 130. Burgund 185. 187.

The arrival of these three important men renewed the mirth of the guests and their joy began to mount into extravagance. Many were intoxicated; guests and attendants without distinction, the serious and the ludicrous, drunkenness and the affairs of the State were blended with one another in a burlesque fashion, and the general distress of the country produced a bacchanalian festivity. It did not stop here; what had been resolved in the moment of intoxication, was executed when sober. It was necessary to evince in a perceptible manner to the people the existence of their protectors and to fan the zeal of the faction by a visible emblem; for this there was no better means than to exhibit publicly this name of the Geusen and to borrow therefrom the tokens of the association. In a few days the town of Brussels swarmed with ash-gray garments such as were seen on mendicant monks and penitents. The whole family of a Confederate with the domestics put themselves in the dress of this order. Some carried wooden bowls overlaid with thin plates of silver, just such cups, or knives also, in short the whole paraphernalia of the beggar tribe, on their hats or allowed them to hang at their girdles. Round the neck they hung a golden or silver coin, afterwards called the Geusen penny, of which one side bore the effigy of the King with the inscription: "True to the King." On the other side were seen two hands clasped together, which held a pouch for provisions with

the words: "as far as the beggars scrip." Hence the origin of the name of the Geusen, which subsequently in the Netherlands all those bore who seceded from popery, and took up arms against the King.

Before the confederates separated to disperse themselves among the provinces, they presented themselves once again before the Dutchess in order to admonish her of leniency in the proceedings against the heretics in the interim, until the answer of the King should arrive from Spain, to prevent the people from being driven to extremities. "If, however," they added, "evil should arise from a contrary behaviour, they wished to be regarded as persons who had done their duty."

Thereupon the Regent responded; "she hoped to adopt such measures, that it would not be possible for any disorders to ensue; but if these nevertheless happened, she would have to ascribe them to no one else but the confederates. She, therefore, earnestly admonished them likewise to fulfil their promises, but especially to receive no new members into the League, to hold no more private assemblies and generally to attempt no innovation. "In order meanwhile to tranquillise them the private Secretary Berti was commanded to shew them the letters, wherein moderation was recommended to the Inquisitors and secular judges towards all those, who had not aggravated their heretical offences by any civil crime. Before

their departure from Brussels they named four presidents from among their number, who were to take care of the affairs of the League; and besides these, particular administrators for each province. A few were left behind in Brussels itself to keep a watchful eye on all the movements of the Court. Brederode, Kuilemburg and Bergen at last quitted the town attended by 550 horsemen, saluted it once more beyond the walls with the discharge of their muskets, and then parted from one another, Brederode proceeding to Antwerp and the two others to Guelders. The Regent sent off an express courier before the former to Antwerp, to warn the magistrate of that town against him; more than a thousand persons thronged to the hotel where he had alighted. He shewed himself, with a full wine glass in his hand, at the window; "Citizens of Antwerp," he thus addressed them, "I am here at hazard of my possessions and my life, to remove from you the burthen of the Inquisition. If you are willing to share this enterprise with me and to acknowledge me as your leader, accept the health which I here drink to you, and stretch out your hands in testimony of your approbation." Therewith he drank to them, and all hands flew up amid clamorous shouts of exultation. After this heroic deed he quitted Antwerp.

Immediately after the delivery of the petition of the nobles the Regent had caused a new form of the Edicts to be projected through the Privy

Council, which in a measure should keep the mean between the commands of the King and the demands of the Confederates. The question now was if it were more advisable to cause the immediate promulgation of this mitigated form or Moderation, as it was commonly called, or to submit it first to the King for his ratification. The Privy Council, who held it as too bold to take so important a measure, without the foreknowledge, nay contrary to the express injunctions of the monarch, opposed itself to the Prince of Orange, who voted for the first plan. Besides, there was cause to fear that the nation would not even be contented with this, «Moderation,» which was concocted without the assent of the States, which was what they particularly insisted upon. In order, therefore, to win from the States their consent, or rather to obtain it from them by stealth, the Regent employed the artifice of proposing the question to the Provinces one by one, and to those first which possessed the least freedom, such as Artois, Namur and Luxemburg, by which means she not only prevented one from encouraging another in opposition, but also gained so much, that the freer provinces such as Flanders and Brabant, which were prudently reserved to the last, permitted themselves to be carried away by the example of the others. Through an extremely illegal procedure the Representatives of the towns were taken by surprise, before they could confer with their constituents and complete

silence was imposed upon them with regard to the whole transaction. By these means the Regent obtained the unconditional consent of some of the provinces to the «Moderation», that of others with a few appended clauses. Luxemburg and Namur subscribed it without scruple. The States of Artois simply made the addition, that false informers should be subjected to a retributive penalty; those of Hainault demanded, that instead of confiscation of the estates, which militated against their privileges another discretionary punishment should be introduced. Flanders called for the entire abolition of the Inquisition, and desired that the right of appeal to their own province might be secured to the accused. The States of Brabant permitted themselves to be outwitted by the intrigues of the Court. Zealand, Holland, Utrecht, Guelders and Friesland, as being provinces, which were protected by the most important privileges and which watched over them with the greatest jealousy, were never asked for their opinion. The provincial Courts of judicature also had been required to make a report on the newly projected amendment, but it may well be supposed not to have been very favourable, as it never reached Spain. We may form a conclusion as to the general import of this mitigation, which, however, really deserved its name, from the Edicts themselves. «Sectarian writers», it was therein stated, «the Heads of teachers of Sects, as also those

was incapacitated from setting out with him immediately through a wound, which he received from the blow of a tennis ball. Nevertheless, as the Regent importuned him, to make haste, he set out alone, not however, as he hoped, to carry through the cause of his nation in Spain, but to die for it.

The posture of affairs had now changed so much, the step, which the nobles had taken, had brought so near a complete rupture with the government, that it seemed henceforth impossible for the Prince and his friends, to maintain any longer the intermediate and delicate position, which they had hitherto held between the Republic and the Court, or to reconcile such contradictory duties. Great as must have been the restraint, which they had to put on themselves, with their mode of thinking, not to take part in this contest; and much as their natural spirit of liberty, their love for their country and their notions of toleration must have suffered from the constraint, which their posts imposed upon them; in the same degree must Philip's distrust of them, the small consideration, with which their opinions had now for a long time been wont to be received, and the slighting treatment which they experienced from the Dutchess, have cooled their zeal for the service and made irksome to them the continuation of a part, which they played with so much repugnance and with so little thanks. This was further aided by several intimations from

Spain, which placed beyond doubt the displeasure of the King at the petition of the nobles and his small satisfaction with their own behaviour on that occasion, and which made them expect from him measures, to which they, as the supporters of the liberty of their country and for the most part friends or blood relations of the Confederates, could never lend their hand. On the name, which was applied in Spain to the confederacy of the nobles, it principally now depended, what party they should for the future take. If the petition was called rebellion, no alternative was left them, but either to come to a dangerous explanation with the Court before the time, or to aid in treating those as enemies, whose interest was also theirs, and the spirit of whose actions was in accordance with their own. They could avoid this perilous alternative only by withdrawing entirely from public affairs; a plan, which they had already once practically adopted and which under present circumstances was more than a simple expedient. The whole nation had their eyes upon them. The unlimited confidence in their principles, and the universal veneration of them, which bordered closely on idolatry, ennobled the cause, which they made their own, and overthrew that, which they abandoned. Their share in the administration of the State, though it might be no more than a mere name, kept the opposite party in bounds; while they attended the Senate, violent measures were avoided, because they had

still some expectations from fair means. Their non-approbation even, if it did not proceed from their hearts, made the faction dispirited and uncertain, which on the contrary would exert itself in its full strength, so soon as it could reckon even distantly on so important a sanction. The same measures of the Government, which, if they only came through their hands, were certain of a favourable result, must become distrusted and futile without them; even the royal concession, if it was not the work of these friends of the people, must fail of the chief part of its efficacy. Besides that their retirement from affairs deprived the Regent of counsel at a time, when counsel was most indispensable to her, this withdrawal gave at the same time the preponderance to a party, which guided by a blind dependance on the court and unacquainted with the peculiarities of republican character, would neglect nothing to aggravate the evil and to drive to extremity the exasperation of the public mind.

All these grounds, amongst which it is open to every one, according to his good or bad opinion of the Prince to select those, which may have prevailed with him, now moved that nobleman to desert the Regent and to divest himself of all share in public affairs. The opportunity for putting this resolve into execution soon presented itself. The Prince had voted for the immediate promulgation of the newly revised Edicts; the Regent followed the opinion of the Privy

Council and transmitted them previously to the King. «I now see clearly,» he broke out with pretended vehemence, «that all the advice, which I give is distrusted. The King requires no servants, of whose loyalty he must be doubtful, and far be it from me, to thrust my services upon a Sovereign, who is averse to receive them. Better, therefore, for him and me, that I withdraw from public affairs.» The Count of Hoorn expressed himself nearly to the same effect; Egmont requested permission to use the Baths at Aix la Chapelle, which he said the physician had ordered him, although (as it is stated in his accusation) he appeared healthy itself. The Regent terrified at the consequences, which this step must inevitably induce, spoke sharply to the Prince. «If neither my representations, nor the general welfare can prevail so far upon you, as to dissuade you from this intention, you should at least be more careful of your own reputation. Louis of Nassau is your brother, he and Count Brederode, the Heads of the confederacy, have publicly been your guests. The substance of the petition is the same as that of which all your representations in the Council of State have hitherto treated. If you now suddenly desert the cause of your King, will it not be universally said, that you favour the conspiracy?» It is not stated, whether the Prince at this time really withdrew from the Council of State; but if he did, he must soon have altered his mind, for we

see him, shortly after, appear again in public transactions. Egmont, it appears, allowed himself to be overcome by the remonstrances of the Regent; Hoorn*) alone actually withdrew himself to one of his estates with the resolution of never more serving either Emperor or King. Meanwhile the Geusen had dispersed themselves through all the Provinces and diffused, wherever they shewed themselves, the most favorable reports of the success of their undertaking. According to their assertions all was gained for religious freedom, and in order completely to establish this belief, they helped themselves, where the truth failed them, with falsehood. Thus, for example, they shewed a forged letter of the knights of the Fleece, in which the latter solemnly declared, that no one for the future should have to fear imprisonment, or banishment, or death, on account of religion, unless he had at the same time incurred the guilt of a political crime, in which case, still, the Confederates alone would be his judges; and this should hold good, until the King disposed otherwise with the States of the realm. Earnestly as the knights, upon the first information of the deception, which had been practised, applied themselves, to rescue the nation from their declusion, still this invention had in this short interval already done great service to the faction. If there are truths, whose effect is

*) Where he remained three months inactive. Accusation of Hoorn. 118.

limited to a single moment, then inventions, which endure only for this moment, can easily assume their place. Besides that the report, which had been spread, awakened distrust between the Regent and the knights, and supported the courage of the Protestants by fresh hopes, it played into the hands of those, who were meditating innovation, an appearance of right, which if they did not even themselves believe, served as a colouring for their proceedings. However soon this false delusion was contradicted, it must still, in the short space of time that it obtained belief, have occasioned so many extravagancies, have introduced so much dissoluteness and licentiousness, that the return must have become impossible, that they must have seen themselves necessitated to pursue the way they had once entered, as well from habitude as from despair. Immediately on the first news of this happy result, the fugitive Protestants returned to their homes from which they had only unwillingly parted; those who had concealed themselves came forth from their lurking places; those who had hitherto paid homage to the new religion only in their hearts, emboldened by these acts of toleration, now came over to it publicly and decidedly. The name of the «Geusen» was extolled in all the provinces; they were called the pillars of religion and of liberty; their party increased daily and many merchants began to wear their insignia. These latter introduced this further alteration in the

«Geusen» penny, that they placed thereon two travellers, staffs laid cross wise, in order as it were to intimate they stood each instant prepared and ready, to forsake house and hearth for the sake of religion. The establishment of the Geusen-League had given to things an entirely different form. The murmur of the subjects, impotent and despised till hitherto, because it was only the cry of individuals, had now that it was concentrated into a body become formidable, and had gained power, direction and firmness through union. Every rebellious person now looked on himself as the member of a venerable and formidable whole, and believed that he secured his own temerity, in laying it down at this place of assemblage of the general discontent. To be called an important acquisition to the League flattered the vain; to be lost unnoticed and unpunished in this great stream was an inducement to the timid. The face, which the conspiracy shewed to the nation, was very unlike that, which it had turned to the Court. But had its objects been the purest, if it had really meant as well to the throne as it wished it externally to appear, still the great multitude would have kept only to what was illegal in its proceedings, and its better aim would have been entirely lost upon them.



PUBLIC PREACHING.

No moment could be more favourable to the Huguenots and the German Protestants, than this, to seek a market for their dangerous commodity in the Netherlands. Every considerable town now swarmed with suspicious arrivals, masked spies, with heretics of all descriptions, and their Apostles. There were three religious parties, which amongst those which had seceded from the ruling church, had made material progress in the Provinces. Friesland and the districts adjoining were overrun by the Anabaptists, who, however, as the most indigent of all, without government, without political form, without military resources and furthermore at strife amongst themselves awakened the least apprehension. Of far more importance were the Calvinists who occupied the southern provinces and Flanders in particular, who were powerfully supported by their neighbours the Huguenots, the republic of Geneva, the Swiss Cantons and part of Germany, and whose religion, with the exception of a slight difference, was that of the throne in England. Their party was the most

numerous of all, especially amongst the merchants and the common citizens, and the Huguenots, who had been driven from France had been the chief originators of it. The Lutherans yielded to them in regard to numbers and wealth, but derived weight from a greater number of adherents among the nobility. The latter occupied for the most part the eastern portion of the Netherlands, which borders on Germany; their Persuasion reigned in some of the northern territories; the most powerful princes of the empire were their allies and the religious freedom of that country, to which also the Netherlands belonged through the Burgundian treaty, could with the best appearance of right be claimed for them. The confluence of these three religions was in Antwerp, because the crowded population there concealed them and the mingling of all nations in that town, favoured liberty. These three churches had nothing in common, except an equally inextinguishable hatred against popery, against the Inquisition in particular, and against the Spanish Government, whose instrument it was; but this very jealousy, with which they mutually watched each other, kept their zeal in exercise, and prevented the glowing ardour of fanaticism among them from waxing dull.

The Regent, in expectation, that the projected "Moderation" would be sanctioned, had in the meanwhile, in order to gratify the "Geusen," recommended to the Governors and municipal offi-

cers of the Provinces moderation in their proceedings against heretics; instructions, which the majority of these, who administered the melancholy office of punishment only with repugnance, eagerly followed and took in their most extended sense. Most of the chief Magistrates were in their hearts averse to the Inquisition and the Spanish tyranny, and many of them were even themselves secretly attached to one or other of the religious parties; even those who were not, grudged their sworn enemies, the Spaniards, the pleasure of seeing their countrymen illtreated. They, therefore, purposely misunderstood the Regent, and allowed the Inquisition and the Edicts to fall almost entirely into disuse. This forbearance of the government, combined with the dazzling representations of the "Geusen" lured from their obscurity the Protestants, who without that had increased too much to be any longer concealed. Hitherto they had contented themselves with secret assemblies by night; now, however, they thought themselves numerous and formidable enough, to be able to venture on these meetings openly. This license took its first commencement between Oudenarde and Ghent and soon spread through all the rest of Flanders. A certain Hermann Stricker, born at Oberyssel formerly a monk and who had escaped from the cloister, a daring enthusiast, of able mind, imposing figure and ready tongue, was the first who led out the people to a sermon in the open air. The novelty of the

undertaking collected about him a crowd of 7000 persons. A judge from the neighbourhood, who more courageous, than wise, rushed amongst the crowd, with his drawn sword to seize the preacher in the midst of them, was received by the people (who in want of other weapons took up stones) in such evil sort that, stretched there and severely wounded, he was glad to save his life by entreaties. *)

The first successful attempts inspired courage for a second. In the vicinity of Aalst they assembled again in still greater numbers; but they were now provided with rapiers, firearms and halberds, placed sentries and barricaded the approaches with carts and carriages. Whoever chanced to pass by was obliged, whether willing or otherwise, to take part in the religious service, with which object look out parties were placed on the watch. At the entrance booksellers stationed themselves, who offered for sale Protestant catechisms, religious tracts and pasquinades on the Bishops. The Apostle Hermann Stricker held forth from a pulpit, which was extemporaneously constructed with carts and trunks of trees. A canvass awning drawn over it protected him from the sun

*) This unheard of foolhardy act of a single man to rush amidst a crowd of 7000 infatuated persons, who were still more inflamed by a common spirit of devotion, to apprehend before their eyes a man whom they adored, proves more than all, that can be said on the subject, with what insolent contempt the Catholics of that time must have looked down upon the so called heretics, whom they treated as an inferior race of beings.

and the rain; the people placed themselves to leeward of him, in order to be sure not to lose any part of his sermon, whose chief ingredients were revilings against Popery. Water was drawn from the nearest river in order to have baptized by him the new born infants, as in the earliest times of Christianity without further ceremony. Here sacraments were received after the Calvinistic fashion, couples wedded and marriage ties dissolved. In this manner half the population of Ghent had left its gates; the influence extended itself constantly more and more and had in a short time overspread the whole of East Flanders. In like manner Peter Dathen, another renegade monk, from Poperingen, stirred up West Flanders; 15000 persons thronged to his preaching from the villages and hamlets; their number made them courageous enough to storm and break into the prisons, where some Anabaptists were reserved for martyrdom. The Protestants in Tournay were excited to a similar pitch of daring by a certain Ambrosius Ville, a French Calvinist. They demanded too the release of those of their sect who were imprisoned, and allowed repeated threats to fall from them, that they would deliver over the town to the French. It was entirely destitute of garrison, which the Commandant from fear of treason had withdrawn into the castle, and which moreover refused to act against their fellow citizens. The Sectarians went so far in their overdaring that they demanded for themselves a

separate public church within the town; when this was denied them they entered into league with Valenciennes and Antwerp in order to carry through their form of worship, after the example of the other towns, by open force. These three towns stood in the most intimate connection with one another and the Protestant party was equally powerful in all three. While, however, no single one ventured to commence the disturbance, they agreed, that they would simultaneously make a beginning with public preaching. Brederode's appearance in Antwerp at last gave them courage. Six thousand persons poured forth from the town on the same day, on which the same thing happened in Tournay and Valenciennes, men and women together. Mothers dragged after them children of the tenderest age. They closed the place with vehicles, which they bound together, behind which armed men held themselves concealed, in order to protect the service against any chance surprise. The preachers were some of them Germans, some Huguenots and spoke in the Walloon dialect; some among them were of the very lowest classes, and even citizens felt themselves called to this sacred work. No authority of the myrmidons of justice alarmed them more. Mere curiosity drew many to the spot, if but to hear what kind of new and strange things these foreign arrivals, who had caused so much talk, would set forth. Others were attracted by the melody of the Psalms, which were sung

in French verses, as was the custom in Geneva. A great number were drawn thither by these sermons as by amusing comedies, as in them the Pope, the Fathers of the ecclesiastical Council at Trent, Purgatory and other dogmas of the ruling church were abused in a style of buffoonery. The more wildly this was carried on, the more it tickled the ears of the lower orders, and a universal clapping of hands, as in a theatre, rewarded the speaker, who had surpassed others in extravagance. But the ridicule, which in these meetings was cast upon the ruling church was nevertheless not entirely lost in entering the minds of the hearers, just as little as the few grains of reason, which occasionally slipped in among it; and many a one, who had there sought anything but truth, brought that too perhaps back with him, without knowing it himself.

These assemblies were repeated many days, and with each day the boldness of the Sectarians rose, until they even ventured, after concluding the service, to conduct their preachers home in Triumph, with an escort of armed horsemen, and thus ostentatiously to insult the law. The Town-Council sent express after express to the Dutchess, in order to prevail on her, to consent to visit them in person, and if possible to reside for a time in Antwerp, as the only expedient to curb the arrogance of the town; for the most eminent merchants afraid of being plundered, stood already prepared to quit it. Fear, of staking the

royal dignity on so hazardous a game, forbade her, indeed, to comply, but the Count of Megen was despatched thither in her stead, in order to treat with the Magistrate respecting the introduction of a garrison. The rebellious mob, to whom the object of his visit did not remain long concealed, collected around him with tumultuous cries. "He was known," they shouted to him, "as a sworn enemy of the Geusen; it was known, that he brought bondage and the Inquisition and he should leave the town on the spot." Nor was the tumult quieted till Megen was beyond the gates. The Calvinists of this town now handed in to the Magistrate a memorial, in which they showed, that their great number made it henceforward impossible, to assemble themselves in secret, and requested a distinct house of worship inside the town. The Town-Council renewed its entreaties to the Dutchess, that she would come to the assistance of the distressed town by her personal presence, or would at least send thither the Prince of Orange, as the only person, for whom the people would still have any respect, and moreover was, besides this, bound to the town of Antwerp by his hereditary title of its Burgrave. In order to avoid the greater evil, she was compelled to consent to the second demand, and entrust Antwerp to the Prince, much as it went against her inclination. He, after he had allowed himself to be long vainly entreated while he appeared once for all resolved, to take

no farther share in public affairs, at last yielded to the earnest persuasions of the Régent and the boisterous wishes of the people. Brederode came out to meet him to the distance of half a mile from the town, with a numerous retinue, and both parties saluted each other with the discharge of pistols. Antwerp appeared to have poured out all its inhabitants to receive its deliverer. The whole highroad swarmed with persons; the roofs were taken off the country houses, in order that they might contain more spectators; behind fences, from churchyard walls, even out of graves started up men; The attachment of the people to the Prince shewed itself in childish effusions. "Long live the Geusen!" was the shout, with which young and old received him. "Look here," cried others, "here is he, who brings us freedom!" — "This, is he," cried the Lutherans, "who brings the Confession of Augsburg!" — "We want no more Geusen henceforth!" exclaimed others; "we have no more need of the troublesome journey to Brussels. He alone is every thing to us!" Those, who knew nothing at all to say vented their extravagant joy in Psalms, which they vociferously chanted around him. He, however, maintained his gravity, beckoned for silence around him, and cried at last, when no one would listen to him, half indignant and half affected: "By God," he exclaimed, "they should look, what they were doing, they would one day repent, what they had now done." The

shouts increased, as he rode into the town itself. The first conference of the Prince with the Heads of the different religious parties, whom he sent for and interrogated separately, presently convinced him, that the chief source of the evil was to be sought for in the mutual distrust of the parties amongst one another and in the suspicions of the citizens regarding the objects of the Government, and that, therefore, his first business must be, to restore confidence to their minds. From the hands of the Calvinists, as the most numerous, he sought by persuasion and artifice to wring their weapons, in which he at last with much labour succeeded. As, however, soon afterwards some waggons were laden with ammunition in Malines, and the High Bailiff of Brabant shewed himself frequently in the territory dependant on Antwerp with armed men, the Calvinists feared hostile interruption to their religious worship, and besought the Prince, to allot them a place within the walls for their sermons, where they might be secure from a surprise. He succeeded once more in pacifying them, and his presence fortunately restrained the tumult from breaking out, even during the festival of the assumption of the Virgin, which had drawn a crowd of people towards the town, and from whom there was every reason for alarm. The image of the Virgin was carried round with the usual pomp without interruption; a few words of abuse and a very quiet murmur about idolatry was all which the non-Catholic mob presumed on against the Procession.

(1566) While the Regent received from one Province after another the most melancholy tidings of the excesses of the Protestants, and while she trembled for Antwerp which she was compelled to leave in the dangerous hands of Orange, she was placed in no less alarm from the other side. Immediately after the first information of the public preaching, she had called upon the League, to fulfil now its promises and to lend her a helping hand for the restoration of order. Count Brederode used this pretext, to summon a general meeting of the whole League, for which he could have selected no more dangerous moment than the present. So ostentatious a display of the internal strength of the League, whose existence and protection alone had been able to encourage the Protestant mob, to go as far, as it had gone, must now in the very same degree raise the confidence of the Sectarians, as it depressed the courage of the Regent. The convention took place in a town of Liege St. Truyen, into which Brederode and Louis of Nassau had thrown themselves at the head of 2000 confederates. As the long delay of the royal answer from Madrid seemed to presage them no good from that quarter, they considered it in any case advisable to extort a letter of indemnity for their persons from the Regent. Those among them, who were conscious of disloyal sympathy with the Protestant mob looked on their licentiousness as a favourable circumstance for the League; the apparent

success of those, to a fellowship with whom they degraded themselves, seduced them to alter their tone; their former laudable zeal began to degenerate into insolence and defiance. Many thought that they ought to avail themselves of the general confusion and the perplexity of the Dutchess, to assume a bolder tone and heap demand upon demand. The Catholic members of the Léague, among whom many in their hearts were still strongly inclined to the royal cause, and had been rather dragged into a connection with the League by occasion and example, than had joined it from inward feeling, here heard, to their no small astonishment, proposals for universal religious liberty and were now shocked to perceive in what a perilous enterprise they had overhastily implicated themselves. Immediately on this discovery the young Count Mansfeld withdrew; and internal dissensions now began already to undermine the work of precipitation and imperceptibly to loosen the joinings of the League.

The Count of Egmont and William of Orange were empowered by the Regent, to treat with the Confederates. Twelve of the latter, among whom were Louis of Nassau, Brederode and Kuilemburg, conferred with them in Duffle, a village near Malines, "Wherefore this new step?" said the Regent to them by the mouth of these two noblemen. "I have been required to despatch Ambassadors to Spain; I have sent them thither. The Edicts

and the Inquisition have been found much too rigorous; I have rendered both more lenient. A general assembly of the States of the realm has been proposed; I have submitted this request to the King, because I could not grant it from my own authority. What have I then unwittingly still omitted or done, that should render this meeting in St. Truyen necessary? Is it perhaps fear of the anger of the King and of its consequences, which disturbs the Confederates. The provocation is great, but his mercy is even greater. Where is now the promise of the League, to excite no disturbances amongst the people? Where those fine sounding words, that they were ready, rather to die at my feet, than to offend against any of the prerogatives of the King? The innovators already venture on things, which border very closely on rebellion and lead the Republic to destruction; and it is the League to which they appeal. If it silently tolerates this, it brings on itself the accusation of participating in the guilt of their offences; if it means truly with its King, it cannot remain inactive in this licentiousness of the mob. But does it not itself outstrip the insane population by its dangerous example, by concluding alliances with the enemies of the country and by giving force to these bad reports by its present culpable meeting?"

The League formally justified itself against this in a memorial, which it caused to be delivered

by three deputed members, to the Council of State at Brussels.

“All,” such was its import, “that your Highness has done in respect to our petition we have felt with the most lively gratitude; and we can complain of no new change, which has during this time been anywhere introduced contrary to your promise, but when we nevertheless continue to hear and convince ourselves by our own eyes, that at all places our fellow-citizens are dragged before Courts of justice on account of religion and led to execution, we cannot help coming to the conclusion that the orders of your Highness are by the judicial Courts at least — very little regarded. What the League promised on its part, it has honestly fulfilled, it has too, endeavoured to the utmost of its power, to prevent the public preachings; but it is certainly no wonder, that the so long delay of an answer from Madrid fills the minds of the people with distrust and the disappointed hope of a general assembly of the States, makes them very little disposed to believe further assurances. The League has never allied itself with the enemies of the Country; nor ever felt any temptation thereto. If the arms of France were to shew themselves in the Provinces, we, the confederates, would be the first to mount our horses, to drive them out, but we wish to be candid with your Highness. We thought we read marks of your displeasure

in your countenance; we see men in exclusive possession of your favour, who are notorious for their hatred against us. We are daily compelled to hear, that persons are warned from associating with us, as against those infected with the plague; that the arrival of the King is denounced to us, as the opening of a day of judgment — what is more natural, than that the distrust shewn towards us should at last too rouse our own? that the reproach of treason, with which it is endeavoured to blacken our league, that the warlike preparations of the Duke of Savoy and of other princes, which, as report says, are directed against us, the negotiations of the King with the French Court, to obtain a passage through that Kingdom for a Spanish army, which is said, to be destined for the Netherlands, and other occurrences of the same nature, should have stimulated us to bethink ourselves of the means of selfdefence and to strengthen ourselves by an alliance with our friends beyond the frontier? On a general, uncertain and vague rumour we are accused of a share in this licentiousness of the Protestant mob; but whom does not general rumour accuse? True it is, certainly, that among us, too are Protestants, to whom religious toleration would be the most welcome boon; but even they have never forgotten what they owe to their Sovereign. It is not fear of the King's anger, which instigated us to hold this assembly. The King is good and we will hope, that he is just. It cannot, therefore, be pardon, that we

seek from him, and just as little can it be oblivion, which we solicit for these actions, which are not the most inconsiderable of the services we have performed to his Majesty. Again it is true that the Delegates of the Lutherans and Calvinists are with us in St. Truyen; nay more, they have delivered to us a petition, which we here annexed present to your Highness. They offer therein to lay down their arms in attending their preachings, if the League will tender its security to them and be willing to engage for a general assembly of the States. We have thought it incumbent upon us, to communicate both these matters to you, but our guarantee has no force, if it is not at the same time confirmed by your Highness and some of your principal Counsellors. Among these no one can be so well acquainted with the circumstances of our cause, or be so upright in intention towards us, as the Prince of Orange, and the Counts of Hoorn and Egmont. We gladly accept these three as mediators, if the necessary full powers are given to them, and assurance is afforded us, that no troops will be enlisted without their knowledge, and no chiefs appointed over them. This guarantee, however, we demand only for a given period, after the expiration of which it will rest with the King, whether he will cancel or confirm it. If the first should happen, it is then but fair, that a period should be allowed us to place our persons and our property in security; for

which three weeks will be sufficient. Finally and in conclusion, we on our part also pledge ourselves, to undertake nothing new without the concurrence of those three persons, our Mediators.” —

The League could not have held such a bold discourse, if it had not had important support, and could not rely on well founded protection; but the Regent found herself as little in a condition to concede to them the point demanded, as she was incapable of opposing them in earnest. In Brussels, which was now deserted by most of the Counsellors of State, who had either departed to their provinces or had withdrawn themselves under some pretext or other from public affairs; destitute as well of advisers as of money, which latter want compelled her to appeal to the liberality of the clergy, and (when these means, too, did not suffice) to have recourse to a Lottery; dependent on orders from Spain, which were ever expected and never received, she saw herself at last brought to the degrading expedient, of entering into an agreement with the Confederates in St. Truyen, that she would wait 24 days longer for the King's resolution, before she undertook any further step. It was certainly surprising, that the King still continued to delay a decisive answer to the petition, although it was universally known, that he had answered much later letters, and that the Regent importuned him most earnestly on this

head. She had also immediately on the commencement of the public preaching despatched the Marquis of Bergen after the Baron of Montigny, who, as an eyewitness of these new occurrences, could give so much the more lively support to her written account of them and determine the King so much the more expeditiously.

(1566) In the meanwhile the Netherlandish Ambassador, Florence of Montigny had arrived in Madrid, where he was met with the greatest show of consideration. The import of his instructions was the abolition of the Inquisition and mitigation of the Edicts; the augmentation of the Council of State and abolition of the two other Councils; the request of the nation for a general assembly of the States, and the solicitations of the Regent for a personal visit of the King. As the latter, however, was only desirous of gaining time, Montigny was put off with fair words until the arrival of his coadjutor without whom the King was not willing to come to any final determination. The Fleming had however every day and at any hour, that he desired, audience with the King, who commanded also, that on all occasions the Despatches of the Dutchess and the answers to them should be communicated to him. He was frequently also admitted to the Council for Netherlandish affairs, where he never omitted to call the King's attention to the necessity for a general assembly of

the States, as to the only means of meeting the commotions, which had hitherto arisen and which would make every other measure unnecessary. He pointed out to him, also, that a general and unreserved pardon of all that had passed would alone be able to eradicate the distrust, which was the basis of all these complaints and would perpetually counteract every measure however well selected. He ventured, from his thorough acquaintance with circumstances and accurate knowledge of the character of his countrymen, to pledge himself to the King for their inviolable loyalty, so soon as the latter should have convinced them of the fairness of his intentions by the straightforwardness of his proceedings, while on the contrary, guided by the same experience he took from him all hopes thereof so long as they were not cured of the fear, that they were the objects of his oppression and to serve as sacrifices to the envy of the Spanish nobles. At last his coadjutor made his appearance, and the objects of their embassy were made the subject of repeated deliberations.

(1566) The King was at that time at his seat near Segrovice, where also he assembled his State Council. The members were: the Duke of Alba; Don Gomez de Figueroa; the Count of Feria; Don Antonio of Toledo, Grand Commander of St. John; Don John Manriquez of Lara, Lord Steward to the Queen; Ruy Gomez, Prince of Eboli and Count of Melito; Louis of Quixada,

Master of the Horse to the Prince; Charles Tyssenacque President of the Council for the Netherlands; State Counsellor and keeper of the Seal Hopper; and State-Counsellor Corteville. The sitting of the Council was protracted for several days; both ambassadors were in attendance, but the King was not himself present. Here then the behaviour of the Netherlandish nobles was examined by Spanish eyes; step by step it was traced back to its most distant source; circumstances were brought into relation with one another which never had any connection; and a matured and far-sighted plan was made out of what had been the off-spring of the moment. All the different transactions and attempts of the nobles the series of which had been governed by chance alone, and which were guided by the natural order of events, in this manner and not differently, were said to be deduced from a preconcerted scheme, for introducing universal religious liberty, and for bringing the helm of power into the hands of the nobles. The first step to this end, it was said, was the violent expulsion of the Minister Granvella, against whom nothing could be charged, except that he was in possession of a power, which they preferred rather to exercise themselves. The second step was made by sending the Count of Egmont to Spain, who was to urge the abolition of the Inquisition and mitigation of the penal statutes and prevail on the King to an augmentation of the Council of State. As, however, this could not be subreptitiously obtained in so

quiet a manner, it was endeavoured to extort it from the court by a third and more daring step by a formal conspiracy, the League of the Geusen. A fourth step to the same end was this new embassy, where the mask was boldly cast aside, and the object to which all the preceding steps had tended, clearly brought to light through the insane proposals which persons were not ashamed to make to the King. Or, they continued, could the abolition of the Inquisition lead to any thing less than a complete freedom of belief? Was not the helm of the conscience lost in losing it? Did not the proposed "Moderation" introduce an absolute impunity for all heresies? What was the project of augmenting the Council of State and of suppressing the other two Councils, but a complete remodelling of the government of the Country in favour of the nobles? A General government for all the Provinces of the Netherlands? Was not this banding together in public preachings again the third conspiracy which had been undertaken with the same objects, as the League of the nobles in the Council of State, and that of the Geusen had not appeared to have sufficient effect? Whatever, however, the sources of this evil might be, it was confessed, that it was, on that account, not the less important and imminent. The immediate personal presence of the King in Brussels was, indubitably, the most efficacious means, to remedy it quickly and fundamentally. As, however, it was already so late.

in the year and the preparations for the journey would occupy the short time before the winter set in; as the stormy season of the year, as well as the danger from French and English ships, which rendered the sea unsafe, did not allow of taking the northern route, which was the shorter of the two; as the rebels themselves meanwhile might possess themselves of the island of Walcheren, and oppose the landing of the King: for all these reasons, the journey was not to be thought of before the spring and in absence of the only complete remedy it was necessary to rest satisfied with a partial expedient. It was therefore agreed to propose to the King, in the first place: that he should recal the Papal Inquisition from the Provinces and rest satisfied with that of the Bishops; in the second place that a new plan for the mitigation of the Edicts should be projected, by which the honor of religion and of the King would be better preserved than it had been in the transmitted "Moderation;" thirdly that the King should impart to the Regent full powers, to cause grace to be extended to all those, who had not already committed any heinous crime, or who had not as yet been condemned by judicial process, but with the exception of the preachers, and those who concealed them, in order that the minds of the people might be reassured and no humane means left untried. All leagues, associations, public assemblies and preachings, must henceforth be prohibited under heavy penalties; if this, however,

was infringed, the Regent should have the liberty of employing the regular troops and garrisons for the forcible reduction of the refractory, and also in case of necessity of enlisting new troops, and of naming the commanders over them, according as should seem good to her. Finally it would have a good effect, if His Majesty would write to the most eminent towns, Prelates and leaders of the nobility, to some in his own hand, and to all in a gracious tone, in order to stimulate their zeal in his service.

So soon as this resolution of his Council of State was submitted to the King, his first measure was, to command public processions and prayers in the most considerable places of the Kingdom and also of the Netherlands, in order to implore the divine guidance in his decision. He appeared in his own person in the Council of State in order to approve this resolution, and cause it at the same time to be drawn out. He declared the general Diet to be useless and refused it in toto; he, however, bound himself, to entertain some German regiments in his pay and to pay them their arrears, in order, that they might serve the more zealously. He commanded the Regent in a private letter to prepare secretly, and under hand for war. 3000 horse and 10,000 infantry were to be assembled by her in Germany, to which end he furnished her with the necessary letters and transmitted to her a sum of 300,000 Gold florins. He accompanied this reso-

lution with several autograph letters to single private individuals and towns, in which he thanked them in very gracious terms for the good zeal which they had shown and called upon them to manifest the same for the future. Notwithstanding that he remained inexorable regarding the most important point, on which the nation now particularly insisted — the convocation of the States: notwithstanding that this limited and ambiguous pardon was as good as none and depended too much on arbitrary will, to be able to reassure the national mind; notwithstanding, in fine, that he rejected the proposed «Moderation», as too lenient, of the severity of which complaints were made — in spite of all this he had this time made an unwonted step in the favour of the nation: he had sacrificed to it the papal Inquisition and left only the Episcopal, to which it was accustomed. The nation had found more equitable judges in the Spanish Council, than might have been with probability hoped for. Whether this wise concession would at another time and under other circumstances have had the expected effect, we will not pretend to say. It now came too late; when (1566) the royal letters reached Brussels the attack on images had broken out.



BOOK 4th.

THE ICONOCLASTS.

The springs of action of this extraordinary occurrence are plainly not to be sought for so far, as many historians labour to prove. It was certainly possible and very probable that the French Protestants industriously exerted themselves, to raise a nursery for their religion in the Netherlands and to prevent by all means in their power, an amicable adjustment of differences between their brethren in the faith in that quarter and the King of Spain, in order to give that implacable foe of their party enough to do in his own country; it was very natural, therefore, that their Agents in the Provinces should leave nothing undone, to encourage their oppressed brethren with daring hopes, to nourish their animosity against the ruling church by all means, to exaggerate the oppression under which they sighed and thereby to hurry them inperceptibly into illegal actions. It is possible too, that there were many among the Confederates, who thought to help out their own lost cause, by increasing the

number of their partners in guilt; who thought they could not otherwise maintain the legality of their league, except they really produced the unfortunate results, against which they had warned the King, and who hoped in the general crime of all to conceal their own. That, however, the outbreak of the Iconoclasts was the fruit of a deliberate plan, which had been preconcerted at the convent of St. Truyen; that in a solemn assembly of so many nobles and warriors, among whom the greatest part were adherents of popery, an individual should be found insane enough to propose an act of positive infamy, which did not so much injure any religious party in particular, as rather tread under foot all regard for religion in general and all morality, and which could have been conceived only in the foul breast of the vilest and most reprobate mind, would be incredible if only for this reason, because this outrageous act was too sudden in its origin, too vehement in its execution, too prodigious, not to have been the offspring of the moment, in which it saw the light, and because it flowed so naturally from the circumstances, which preceded it, that it does not require to be traced back so deeply, in order to lay bare its origin.

A rude, numerous multitude, composed of the dregs of the populace, rendered brutal by brutal treatment, by sanguinary decrees which dogged them in every town, scared from place to place, and driven almost to despair, compelled to steal

their devotion, to hide like a work of darkness, the universal sacred privilege of humanity — before their eyes perhaps, proudly rising the temples of the triumphant church, where their insolent brethren indulge in easy and luxurious devotion; they themselves driven from the walls, expelled perhaps by the weaker number, here in the wild wood, under the burning heat of noon, in disgraceful secrecy to worship the same God — cast out from civil society into a state of nature and reminded, in one dread moment, of the rights of that state! The greater the superiority of their numbers the more unnatural is this destiny; with wonder they perceive the truth. The free heaven, the arms lying ready, the frenzy in their brains and fury in their hearts come to aid the suggestions of a fanatical speaker; the occasion calls, no premeditation is necessary where all eyes express consent; the resolution taken ere yet the word is uttered; ready for any unlawful act, no one yet clearly knows for what, the furious band run in different directions. The smiling prosperity of the hostile religion insults their poverty, the pomp of those temples speaks scorn to their proscribed belief; every cross set up upon the highway, every image of the saints on which they fall, is a trophy, which has been erected over them, and all must perish by their revenging hands. Fanaticism gives rise to these detestable acts, but base passions, bring them to completion.

(1566) The commencement of the attack on

images took place in West-Flanders and Artois, in the districts between Lys and the sea. A frantic herd of artisans, boatmen and peasants mixed with prostitutes, beggars, and thievish vagabonds, about 300 in number, furnished with clubs, axes, hammers, ladders, and cords, but few among them provided with fire arms and daggers, cast themselves, inspired with fanatical fury, into the villages and hamlets near St. Omer, break open the gates of such churches and cloisters, as they find locked, overthrow the altars, break to pieces the images of the Saints and trample them under foot. Their excitement increased by this execrable deed, and reinforced by fresh accessions, they press on by the direct road to Ypres, where they can count on a strong support of Calvinists. Unopposed they break into the cathedral; the walls are mounted with ladders, the pictures broken into fragments with hammers, pulpits and pews hewn to pieces with axes, the altars despoiled of their ornaments and the holy vessels stolen. This example was at the same time followed in Menin, Comines, Verrich, Lille and Oudenarde; the same fury in a few days spreads through the whole of Flanders. At the very time, when the first tidings of this occurrence arrived, Antwerp was swarming with a crowd of houseless people, which the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin had brought together in that town. The presence of the Prince of Orange hardly kept the licentious band within bounds,

who burned to imitate the example of their brethren in St. Omer; but an order of the Court, which summoned him with haste to Brussels, where the Regent was just assembling her Council of State, in order to lay before them the royal letters, obliged him to abandon Antwerp to the outrages of this band. His departure was the signal for tumult. Afraid of the lawless violence of the mob, which manifested itself instantly on the first days of the festival in derisive allusions, they had after carrying the image of the Virgin about for a short time brought it for safety to the choir, without as formerly, setting it up in the middle of the church. This incited some mischievous boys from among the people, to pay it a visit there and jokingly inquire, why it had the other day so soon absented itself? Others mounted on the pulpit where they mimicked the preacher and challenged the Papists to contest. A catholic waterman, who was indignant at this jest, wanted to pluck them down from thence and it came to blows in the Preacher's seat. Similar scenes occurred on the following evening. The numbers increased and many came already provided with suspicious implements and secret weapons. At last it came into the head of one of them to cry, «long live the Geusen!» immediately the whole band took up the cry and the image of the Virgin was called upon to do the same. The few Catholics who were there and who had given up the hope of effecting

anything against these desperadoes, left the church after they had locked all the doors except one. So soon as they found themselves alone, it was proposed to sing one of the Psalms according to the new melody, which was forbidden by the government. While they were yet singing they all cast themselves, as at a given signal, furiously upon the image of the Virgin, transfixing it with swords and daggers, and striking off its head; prostitutes tore the great waxlights from the altar and lighted them to the work. The beautiful organ of the church, a masterpiece of the art of that period, was broken to pieces, all the paintings were effaced, the statues dashed to atoms. A Christ crucified, the size of life, which was set up between the two thieves opposite the high altar, an ancient and highly esteemed performance, was torn down to the ground with cords and cut to pieces with axes, while the two murderers at its side were respectfully spared. The holy wafers were strewed on the ground and trodden under foot; in the wine used for the Lord's supper which was accidentally found there, the health of the Geusen was drunk; they rubbed their shoes with the holy oil. Graves themselves were upturned and the half decayed corpses torn up and trampled on. All this was done with as much wonderful regularity, as if they had previously assigned to each other their parts; every one worked into his neighbour's hands; not one person, dangerous as the work

was, met with any injury; in spite of the thick darkness, although heavy weights fell around and near them and some of them were scuffling while standing on the highest steps of the ladders. In spite of the many tapers, which lighted them in their villainous work, not a single individual was recognised. With incredible rapidity the deed was accomplished; a number of these men, at most a hundred, despoiled in a few hours a temple of seventy altars; after St. Peter's at Rome one of the largest and most magnificent in Christendom.

They did not stop at the cathedral; with torches and tapers which were purloined from it they set out at midnight to prepare a similar destiny for the remaining churches, cloisters and chapels. The hordes increased with every fresh infamous exploit and thieves were allured by the opportunity. They carried away with them what they found, vessels, altarcloths, money and vestments; in the cellars of the cloisters they intoxicated themselves afresh; the monks and nuns abandoned every thing to escape from the deepest insults. The dull noises of these riotous acts had startled the citizens from their first sleep; but night made the danger more alarming than it really was, and instead of hastening to defend their churches, the citizens fortified themselves in their houses and in doubtful terror awaited the day. The rising sun at length disclosed the devastation which had been made—but the work of the night did not terminate with the darkness. Some churches and

cloisters still remained uninjured; a like fate reaches these also; these abominable acts are continued for three days. Afraid at last, that this frantic mob, when it no longer could find any thing sacred to destroy, would make a similar attack on lay property and become dangerous to their warehouses, and at the same time encouraged by discovering the paucity of the enemy's numbers, the wealthier citizens ventured to show themselves in arms at the doors of their houses. All the gates of the town were locked, excepting one single one, through which the Iconoclasts brake forth, in order to renew the same atrocities in the neighbouring districts. During all this time the municipal officers had on only one accasion ventured to exert their authority; so strongly were they held in awe by the superior power of the Calvinists, by whom, as it was believed, the mob of miscreants was hired. The injury which this work of devastation inflicted was incalculable. In the church of the Virgin it was estimated at 400,000 gold florins. Many precious works of art were on this occasion utterly destroyed; many valuable manuscripts, many monuments of importance to history and to diplomacy were thereby lost. The Magistrate at the same time issued orders to restore the plundered articles on pain of death, in which the preachers of the Reformers, who blushed for their sect, effectually assisted him. Much was in this manner saved and the ringleaders of the

mob, whether because they were less animated by desire of plunder, than by fanaticism to revenge, or because they were guided by a foreign hand, resolved to guard against these excesses for the future, and to make their attacks in regular bands and in better order.

The town of Ghent meanwhile trembled for a like destiny. Immediately on the first news of the outbreak of the Iconoclasts in Antwerp, the magistrate of the latter town with the most eminent citizens had bound themselves by oath to repel the church defacers by force; when this oath was proposed to the people also, the voices were divided and many declared plainly, that they were by no means whatever disposed, to hinder so devout a work. Under such a state of affairs the catholic clergy found it adviseable, to deposit the most precious valuables of the churches in the citadel, and some families were permitted, in like manner to secure things which had been presented by their ancestors. Meanwhile all ceremonies were discontinued, the Courts of justice were at a standstill; as in a town taken by the enemy, men trembled in expectation of what was to come. At last an insane band of rioters ventured to send delegates to the Governor of the town with the impudent message: "They were ordered," they said, "by their chiefs, to take the images out of the churches, after the example of the other towns. If they were not opposed it should be done quietly and

without injury; if the contrary, however, they would storm the churches; nay they went so far in their audacity as to ask the aid of the officers of justice therein. At first the Governor was stupefied at this demand; after reflection however, with the idea that excesses would be perhaps more restrained by the presence of the law-officers he did not scruple to grant them the bailiffs.

In Tournay the churches were despoiled of their ornaments in sight of the garrison, who could not be brought to march against the Iconoclasts. As the latter had been told, that the gold and silver vessels with the other church garniture were buried under ground, they turned up the whole floor of the church, and on this occasion the Corpse of the Duke Adolph of Gueldres came again to the light of day, who had formerly fallen in battle at the head of the rebellious men of Ghent and had been interred in Tournay. This Adolph had waged war against his father, and had dragged the vanquished old man some miles barefoot to prison. Charles the Bold, however, of Burgundy had requited him like for like. Now, after half a century, fate avenged a crime against nature through an other against religion; fanaticism was to desecrate that which was holy, in order to expose once more to execration the bones of a parricide. Other Iconoclasts from Valenciennes united themselves with those of Tournay, to

despoil all the cloisters of the surrounding district, in which a valuable library, to collect which, had been the work of centuries, was destroyed by fire. This ruinous example penetrated into Brabant also. Malines, Herzogenbusch, Breda and Bergen op Zoom experienced the same fate. Only the Provinces Namur and Luxemburg, with a part of Artois and of Hainault had the good fortune to keep themselves pure from these outrages. In a period of four or five days in Brabant and Flanders alone, 400 cloisters were despoiled. The northern Netherlands were soon seized with the same mania which had run through the Southern. The Dutch towns, Amsterdam, Leyden and Gravenhaag, had the choice of either voluntarily stripping their churches of their ornaments, or of seeing them torn from them by force. Delft, Haarlem, Gouda and Rotterdam escaped the devastation through the determination of their magistrates. The same acts of violence were practised also in the islands of Zealand; the town of Utrecht, some places in Oberyssel and Gröningen suffered the same storms. The Count of Aremborg protected Friesland and the Count of Megen Gueldres from a like fate. The report of these disturbances, which came in exaggerated from all the Provinces, increased the alarm in Brussels, where the Regent had just made preparations for an extraordinary Session of the Council of State. The swarms of Iconoclasts already penetrated far into Brabant

and even threatened the metropolis, where they were certain of powerful support, with a renewal of the same atrocities there under the eyes of Majesty. The Regent in fear for her own person, which even in the heart of the country, surrounded by Governors and Knights she fancied insecure, was already thinking of flying to Mons, in Hainault, which town the Duke of Arschoot preserved for her as a place of refuge, in order that, she might not be compelled to undignified conditions, by falling into the power of the Iconoclasts. In vain, that the Knights pledged life and blood for her safety, and urged her in the most pressing manner, not to expose them to disgrace through so dishonourable a flight, as though they were wanting in courage or zeal to protect their Princess; in vain, that the town of Brussels itself entreated her not to abandon them in this extremity; that the Council of State made the most impressive representations, not to encourage still more the insolence of the rebels through so pusillanimous a step; she persisted immoveably in this desperate resolution, as messengers after messengers arrived to warn her that the Iconoclasts were advancing against the metropolis. She issued orders, to hold every thing in readiness for her flight which was to take place quietly with the first approach of morning. With break of day the aged Viglius presented himself before her, whom, to gratify the nobles, she had been long

accustomed to neglect. He wished to know what was the meaning of this preparation, whereupon she at last confessed, that she intended to make her escape, and that he would do well, to seek safety for himself by accompanying her. "It is now two years," said the old man to her, "that you might have expected that things would turn out thus. Because I have spoken more freely, than your Courtiers, you have closed your princely ear to me, which has been open only to pernicious suggestions." The Regent allowed, that she had been in fault and had been blinded by an appearance of probity; but that she was now driven by necessity. "Are you resolved" hereupon answered Viglius, "to insist with determination upon the royal commands?" "I am," answered the Dutchess. "Then have recourse to the great secret of the art of government, to dissimulation, and pretend to join the princes until, with their assistance, you have repelled this storm. Show to them a confidence, which you are far from feeling in your heart. Make them take an oath to you, that they will make common cause with you in resisting these disorders. Trust those, as your friends, who show themselves willing to do it; but be careful to avoid scaring away the rest by contemptuous treatment." Viglius kept the Regent further engaged in conversation, until the princes arrived, of whom he knew, that they would in no wise consent to her flight. When they appeared, he

quietly withdrew, in order to issue orders to the Town Council to have the gates of the city closed and egress prohibited to every one connected with the Court. This last measure effected more than all the representations had done. — The regent who saw herself a prisoner in her own Capital, now yielded to the persuasions of the nobles, who pledged themselves to stand by her to the last drop of their blood. She made the Count of Mansfeld, Commander of the town, increased the garrison in haste and armed her whole Court. The State Council was now held, whose final resolution was, to yield to the emergency; to permit the preachings in those places where they had already commenced; to make public the abolition of the Papal Inquisition; to declare the old edicts against the heretics repealed and before all things to grant the required indemnity to the Confederate nobles without limitation. At the same time the Prince of Orange, the Counts of Egmont and Hoorn, with some others were named to confer with the Deputies of the League on this head. The members of the League were solemnly and in the most unequivocal terms declared free from all responsibility on account of the petition which had been presented, and all royal officers and authorities were enjoined, to act in conformity with this assurance, and neither now nor for the future to inflict any injury upon any of the confederates on account of the said petition.

In return the Confederates bound themselves in a reciprocal bond, to be loyal servants of His Majesty, to contribute with all their power to the restoration of quiet and the punishment of Iconoclasts, to prevail on the people to lay down their arms, and to afford active assistance to the king against internal and foreign enemies. Securities and countersecurities were drawn up in form of documents, and subscribed by the plenipotentiaries of both sides; the letter of indemnity in particular was signed by the Dutchess with her own hand and attested by her seal. The Regent had taken this painful step after a severe struggle and with weeping eyes, and tremblingly acknowledged it to the king. She threw all the blame upon the nobles, who had kept her a prisoner in Brussels and compelled her to it by force. Especially she complained bitterly of the Prince of Orange. This business accomplished, all the Governors hastened to their Provinces; Egmont to Flanders, Orange to Antwerp. Here the Protestants had taken possession of the despoiled churches, like a thing, which belongs to the first finder, and had established themselves therein after the usages of war. The Prince restored them to their lawful owners, gave orders for their repair, and re-established the Catholic form of worship in them. Three of the Iconoclasts, who had been seized, atoned for their audacity with the halter, some rioters were banished, many others underwent chastisement.

Afterwards he assembled four deputies from each dialect, or as they were termed, from the nations, and came to an agreement with them, that since the approaching winter made the preaching in the open air thenceforth impossible, three places should be granted to them within the town, where they might either erect new churches, or convert private houses to that purpose. That they should there perform their service every Sunday and holiday and always at the same hour, but that every other day should be prohibited to them for this observance. If no holiday happened in the week, Wednesday should be kept by them in lieu thereof. No religious party should maintain more than two clergymen, and these must be native Netherlanders, or at least have received the right of naturalization from some considerable town of the Provinces. All should take an oath to be subject to the municipal authorities of the town and the Prince of Orange in civil matters. They should bear all imposts like the other citizens. No one should attend sermons armed; a sword however should be allowed to each. No preacher should assail the ruling religion from the pulpit, nor enter upon controverted points, except that which the doctrine itself made unavoidable and what referred to morals. No Psalm should be sung by them beyond the district appointed for them. At the election of their preachers, churchwardens and deacons, as also at all their other consistorial

meetings a person from the government should be present on each occasion, who should report to the Prince and the Magistrate what was there agreed upon. For the rest they should enjoy the same protection as the ruling religion. This arrangement should hold good, until the king, with consent of the States, should determine otherwise; but then it should be free to every one to quit the country with his family and his property. From Antwerp the Prince hastened to Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht, in order to make there similar arrangements for the restoration of peace; Antwerp, however, was, during his absence, entrusted to the superintendence of the Count of Hoogstraten, who was a mild man, and without prejudice to his declared adherence to the League, had never failed in loyalty to the king. It is apparent that the Prince in this agreement had far overstepped the powers entrusted to him, and while in service of the king, had acted exactly like a sovereign lord. But he alleged in excuse, that it would be far easier to the Magistrate, to watch these numerous and powerful sects, if he himself interfered in their worship, and if this took place under his eyes, than if he were to leave the Sectarians to themselves in the open air. The Count of Megen conducted himself with more severity in Gueldres, where he entirely suppressed the Protestant sects and banished all their preachers. In Brussels the Regent availed herself of the ad-

vantage derived from her presence to put a stop to the public preaching even outside the town. When in reference to this the Count of Nassau in the name of the Confederates reminded her of the compact, which had been made, and put the question to her, whether the town of Brussels had inferior rights to the other towns? she answered: if public preachings were held in Brussels before the treaty, it was not her work, if they were now no longer continued. At the same time however, she covertly gave the citizens to understand, that the first, who should venture, to attend a public sermon should certainly be hung. Thus she kept the capital at least faithful to her.

It was more difficult, to quiet Tournay, which office, was committed to the Count of Hoorn in the place of Montigny to whose government the town belonged. Hoorn commanded the Protestants to vacate the churches immediately and to content themselves with a house of worship outside the walls. To this their Preachers objected, that the churches were erected for the use of the people, by which however, not the heads but the majority were implied. If they were expelled from the Catholic churches, it was at least fair that they should be furnished with the money for erecting churches of their own. To this the Magistrate replied: even if the Catholic party was the weaker, it was indisputably the better. The erection of churches should not be forbidden them;

they would however it was to be hoped, after the injury, which the town had already suffered from their brethren the Iconoclasts, not expect from it that it would further incur expense for the erection of their churches. After long quarrelling on both sides the Protestants contrived to remain in possession of some churches, which for greater security they occupied with guards. In Valenciennes too the Protestants refused submission to the conditions, which were offered to them through Philip St. Aldegonde, Baron of Noircarmes, to whom, in the absence of the Marquis of Bergen, the government of that place was entrusted. A reformed preacher, La Grange, a frenchman by birth, stirred up their minds, over which by the force of his eloquence, he had absolute control, to insist upon having churches of their own within the town, and to threaten in case of refusal that they would deliver up the town to the Huguenots. The superior numbers of the Calvinists and their understanding with the Huguenots forbade the Governor to adopt forcible measures against them. The Count of Egmont also now did violence to his natural kindheartedness, in order to manifest his zeal to the King. He introduced a garrison into the town of Ghent and caused some of the worst rebels to be punished with death. The churches were reopened, the Catholic worship renewed, and all foreigners received orders to quit the Province entirely. To the Calvinists, but to these alone, a place

was granted outside the town, for the erection of a church; in return they were compelled to pledge themselves to the most rigid obedience to the municipal authorities of the town and to active co-operation in the proceedings against the Iconoclasts; similar arrangements were made by him through all Flanders and Artois. One of his noblemen and a member of the League John Cassembrot, Baron of Beckerzeel pursued the Iconoclasts at the head of some horsemen of the League, surprised a band of them, which was just about to break into a town of Hainault near Grammont in Flanders, and took prisoners 30 of them, of whom 22 were hung upon the spot and the rest scourged out of the country.

Services of such importance, one would have thought, did not deserve to be rewarded with the displeasure of the King; what Orange, Egmont and Hoorn performed on this occasion shewed at least as much zeal and had as beneficial a result, as what Noircarmes, Megen and Aremberg accomplished, to whom the King made known his gratitude by words and deeds. But this zeal, these services came too late. They had already spoken too loudly against his edicts, had been too vehement in their opposition to his measures, had insulted him too much in the person of his minister Granvella, for there to have been still room for forgiveness. No time, no repentance, no compensation, however great, could efface this offence from the mind of their Sovereign.

(1566) Philip lay just then sick at Segovia when the news of the outbreak of the Iconoclasts and the agreement entered into with the non-Catholics reached him. The Regent renewed at the same time her urgent entreaty for his personal advent, of which also all the letters treated, which the President Viglius about this time exchanged with his friend Hopperus. Many also of the Netherlandish nobles addressed especial letters to him, as for instance Egmont, Mansfeld, Megen, Aremborg, Noircarmes, and Barlaimont, in which they reported on the state of their Provinces, and sought to invest their arrangements there with the best motives. About this very time arrived a letter from the German Emperor, in which he recommended Philip to act with clemency towards his Netherlandish subjects and offered himself as a Mediator in the matter. He had also written direct to the Regent herself in Brussels, and had added particular letters to the leaders of the nobility, which, however, were never delivered to them. Having conquered the first anger, which this detested circumstance roused in him, the King referred the matter to his Council, to consult over this new incident.

The party of Granvella which had the preponderance in the Council was for remarking a very close connection between the behaviour of the Netherlandish nobles and the excesses of the church desecrators, which was manifest from the similarity of the demands of both parties and

especially from the time at which the latter had made their outbreak. In the very same month they observed, in which the nobles had handed in their three Articles, the Iconoclasts had commenced their work; on the evening of the same day, on which Orange left the town of Antwerp, the churches too were despoiled. During the whole tumult not a finger was lifted to take up arms; all the expedients, which were employed, were directed to the advantage of the sects, all others, on the contrary, were omitted, which tended to the maintenance of the pure faith. Many of the Iconoclasts, it was further said, declared that all that they had done was with the knowledge and consent of the Princes, and nothing was more natural, than that those worthless wretches should seek to screen with great names, a crime which they had undertaken on their own account. A writing also was produced, in which the high nobility promised their services to the Geusen, to bring about an assembly of the States General, which the former however stubbornly denied. Four different seditious parties were noticed in the Netherlands, which were all more or less connected with one another and all worked towards the same object. One of these was shewn to be those bands of reprobates who desecrated the churches; a second was the various sects who had hired the former to perform their infamous acts; the Geusen who had raised themselves to be the defenders of the sects, were said to be the third,

and the leading nobles composed the fourth who were inclined to the Geusen through feudal connections, relationship, and friendship. All consequently were alike fatally infected and all equally guilty. The government had not merely to do with a few isolated members; it had to contend with the whole. When, however, it was considered, that the people were only the part seduced, and the encouragement to rebellion came from higher quarters, one would be disposed, to alter the plan hitherto adopted, which appeared defective in several respects. In that all classes were oppressed without distinction, and just as much severity shewn to the lower orders as contempt to the nobles, both had been compelled to seek aid from one another, a party had been given to the latter and leaders to the former. An unequal treatment of the two was an infallible expedient to separate them; the mob always timid and indolent, if not urged by extreme distress, would very soon desert its adored protectors, and learn to consider their fate as a deserved punishment, so soon as it did not share it with them. It was therefore proposed to the King, for the future to treat the great multitude with more leniency and to turn all severity against the leaders of the faction. In order, however, to avoid the appearance of a disgraceful concession, it was considered advisable to take the intercession of the Emperor as a pretext, which alone, and not the justice of their

demands had, induced the King, out of pure generosity to grant to his Netherlandish subjects, what they asked.

The question of the King's personally proceeding to the Provinces was now again mooted, and all the scruples which had formerly been raised on this score, appeared in the present pressing emergency to vanish. "Now," said Tyssenacque and Hopperus, "the occasion was really present on which the king, according to his own declaration which he formerly made to Count Egmont, would be ready to venture a thousand lives. To restore quiet to the single town of Ghent, Charles the 5th had undertaken a troublesome and dangerous journey through an enemy's country, for the sake of one single town; and now the peace, perhaps even the possession of all the United Provinces was at stake." This was the opinion of the majority and the journey of the king was looked upon as a thing which he could not possibly evade any longer.

The question now was whether he should enter upon it with a numerous body of attendants or with few? and here the Prince of Eboli and the Count of Figueroa were at issue with the Duke of Alba, as the private interest of each differed. If the king journeyed at the head of an army, the Duke of Alba was indispensable, who on the contrary if the matter was peaceably adjusted, in which case he would be less

required, must vacate the field to his rivals. "An army," said Figueroa, "to whom the turn first came to speak," would alarm the princes, through whose territories it should be led, perhaps even meet with opposition from them; it would moreover unnecessarily burthen the Provinces, for whose tranquillization it was intended, and add a new grievance to those, which had already caused the people of that country to go to such lengths. It would press upon all subjects indiscriminately, whereas on the contrary a court of justice peaceably administered would distinguish the innocent from the guilty. The unwontedness and violence of such a measure would tempt the leaders of the faction, to take a more serious view of their behaviour hitherto, in which wantonness and levity had the chief share, and induce them now for the first time to proceed with circumspection and consistency; the thought of having impelled the king to such a length, would plunge them into despair, in which they would undertake anything. If the king placed himself in arms against the rebels, he would lay aside the most important advantage which he possessed over them, namely his authority as Sovereign of the country, which would protect him the more powerfully, the more he shewed that he relied upon that alone. He would place himself thereby, as it were, on a level with the rebels, who on their side would not be at a loss, to raise an army, as the uni-

versal hatred of the Spanish forces would pre-operate for them with the nation. The king would in this manner exchange the certain superiority which his position as prince of the country conferred upon him, for the uncertain result of military operations, which issue as they might, would of necessity destroy a portion of his own subjects. The report of his coming in arms would run before him to the Provinces early enough, to give ample time to all who were conscious of a bad cause, to place themselves in a posture of defence and to bring into effect their resources as well internal as foreign. In this the general alarm would be of important service to them; the uncertainty as to whom would be the object of this warlike approach would carry over even the less guilty to the general mass of the rebels and compel those to become enemies to the king who would never have been so otherwise. If, however, he was known to be coming without such a formidable accompaniment, if his appearance was less that of a sanguinary judge, than of an angry father, the courage of all good men would rise, and the bad would perish, in their own security. They would persuade themselves to consider what had happened as less important, as it had not appeared to the king of sufficient moment, to take any strong measures on that account. They would avoid utterly ruining by acts of open violence a cause, which might perhaps yet be

saved. By this quiet peaceable method that very thing would consequently be gained which, by the other, would be irretrievably lost; the loyal subject would in no degree be mixed up with the culpable rebel; on the latter alone, would the whole weight of the royal anger descend. Not to mention, that at the same time an enormous expense would be avoided, which the transport of a Spanish army to those distant regions would occasion to the crown."

"But," began the Duke of Alba, "can the injury of some few citizens be considered, when danger impends ever the whole? Because a few loyally disposed persons suffer wrong thereby, are the rebels therefore not to be chastised. The offence was general, why should not the punishment be so too? The guilt which the rebels have incurred by their actions, attaches to the rest through their supineness. Whose fault is it but theirs that the former have so far succeeded? Why have they not earlier opposed their first attempts? As yet, it is said, circumstances are not so desperate, as to justify this violent remedy — but who will ensure us that by the time the king arrives, they will not be so, as according to every letter of the Regent all is hastening with rapid strides to a ruinous consummation? Ought it to be hazarded that the King on his entrance into the Provinces should for the first time be made aware, how necessary a military force was to him? It is only too well established, that the rebels have secured them-

selves foreign succour, which stands at their command on the first signal; and is it then time, to think of preparing for war, when the enemy passes the frontiers? Ought it to be risked, the being compelled to rely for aid upon the nearest Netherlandish troops as the best, when their loyalty is so little to be depended upon? And does not the Regent always recur to the fact, that nothing but the want of a suitable military force has hitherto hindered her from enforcing the Edicts and stopping the progress of the rebels? Only a well disciplined and formidable army can entirely cut off from these, the hope of maintaining themselves against their lawful sovereign, and only the certain prospect of their destruction can cause them to lower their demands. Besides, the King cannot venture his person in hostile countries without an adequate force, without which he can enter into no treaties with his rebellious subjects, which would be in accordance with his honor."

(1566) The authority of the Speaker gave the preponderance to his arguments, and the question now was, how soon the King should commence his journey, and what road he should take. As the voyage by sea was on no account to be hazarded by him, he had no other alternative, but either to proceed thither through the passes near Trent across Germany, or to penetrate from Savoy over the Appenine Alps. On the first route he had to fear the German Protestants, to whom the objects of his journey could not be a

matter of indifference, and a passage over the Appenines was at this late season of the year not to be attempted. Moreover, it would be necessary to send for the requisite galleys from Italy and repair them, which would take several months. As finally, the assembly of the Cortes of Castile, from which he could not well be absent, was already appointed for December, the journey could not be undertaken before the spring. Meanwhile the Regent pressed for a decisive resolution, how she was to extricate herself from her present embarrassment, without too far compromising the royal dignity; and something it was necessary to do, before the King undertook to appease the troubles by his personal presence. Two separate letters were therefore despatched to the Dutchess; one public, which she could lay before the States and the Council chambers, and one secret, which was intended for herself alone. In the first the King announced to her his restoration to health and the fortunate birth of the Infanta, Clara, Isabella, Eugenia, afterwards wife of the Archduke Albert of Austria and Princess of the Netherlands. He declared to her his present firm intention, of visiting the Netherlands in person, for which he was already making the necessary preparations. The assembling of the States he refused as he had done previously; no mention was made in this letter of the agreement which she had entered into with the Protestants and with the League,

because he did not find it advisable as yet, to reject it decidedly, and had still less inclination, to acknowledge its validity. On the other hand he ordered her to reinforce the army, to draw together new regiments from Germany and to oppose force to the refractory. For the rest, he concluded; he relied upon the loyalty of the leading nobility, among whom he knew many who were sincere in their feelings for their religion and their King. In the secret letter she was once again enjoined to frustrate the assembling of the States with all her power; but if the general voice should become too powerful for her and she was compelled to yield to force, she was at least to manage so cautiously, that the royal dignity should not suffer and no one should ever learn the King's acquiescence therein.

(1566.) While consultations were being held in Spain over these matters, the Protestants in the Netherlands made the most extensive use of the privileges, which had been compulsorily granted to them. The erection of churches, where it was permitted to them, was completed with incredible rapidity; young and old, gentle and simple, assisted in carrying stones; women sacrificed even their ornaments, in order to accelerate the work. Both religious parties established in several towns consistories, and a church Council of their own, which was commenced in Antwerp, and placed their form of worship on a well regulated footing. It was proposed also, to subscribe money for a

common fund, in order to have immediately at hand, the necessary means in case of unexpected emergencies which concerned the Protestant church in general. In Antwerp a writing was presented to the Count of Hoogstraten by the Calvinists of that town, in which they pledged themselves to pay three millions of dollars for the free exercise of their religion through all the Netherlandish Provinces. Many copies of this writing were circulated in the Netherlands; in order to induce the rest, many had ostentatiously subscribed their names with large sums. Various interpretations of this extravagant offer were made by the enemies of the Reformers, which all had some appearance of reason. Under the pretext, for example, of collecting the requisite sums for the accomplishment of this promise, it was hoped, as some believed, with so much the less suspicion to exact the contributions, which were now required for military resistance; and if the nation should be called upon to incur expence; whether for or against the Regent, it was to be expected that it would much more readily consent to contribute with the view of preserving peace than towards an oppressive and devastating war. Others saw in this offer nothing more than a temporary subterfuge of the Protestants, a blind through which they hoped to keep the Court for a few moments irresolute, until they had gathered strength enough to confront it. Others declared it to be a downright bravado in order to alarm the Regent, and

to raise the courage of the party through the display of such rich resources. Whatever the true motive for this offer was, its originators gained little by it; the contributions flowed in very scantily, and the Court answered the proposal with silent contempt. But the excesses of the Iconoclasts, far from promoting the cause of the League and advancing the Protestants had done both irreparable injury. The sight of their demolished churches, which, according to the expression of Viglius, resembled stables more than houses of God, enraged all the Catholics, and most of all their clergy. All of that religion, who had joined the League, now forsook it, as if even it had not intentionally excited and encouraged the excesses of the Iconoclasts, it had indisputably been remotely at the bottom of them. The Intolerance of the Calvinists, who in the places, where their party ruled, most cruelly oppressed the Catholics, completely snatched the latter from the delusion they were hitherto under, and they gave up defending a party, from which, if they obtained the upper hand, they had so much to fear for their own religion. Thus the League lost many of its best members; the friends and patrons, which it had hitherto found amongst the well intentioned citizens deserted it, and its character in the Republic began perceptibly to decline. The severity with which some of its members, acted against the Iconoclasts in order to show themselves well disposed towards the Regent,

and to remove the suspicion of a connection with the malcontents, injured them with the people, who favoured the latter, and the League was in danger of ruining itself with both parties at the same time.

The Regent was no sooner apprised of this alteration, than she projected a plan, gradually to disunite the whole League or at least to enfeeble it through internal dissensions. She availed herself for this end of the private letters, which the King had addressed to some of the nobles and enclosed to her, with full liberty, to use them at her discretion. These letters, which overflowed with kind expressions, were presented to those for whom they were intended with an attempt at secrecy, which designedly miscarried, so that on each occasion, some one or other of those who received nothing of the sort got a hint of them, and to spread suspicion the more widely numerous copies of the same were circulated. This artifice attained its object. Many members of the League began to place doubts in the firmness of those, to whom such brilliant promises were made; through fear of being deserted by their most important defenders they accepted with eagerness the conditions which were offered to them by the Regent and showed their anxiety for a speedy reconciliation with the Court. The general rumour of the impending visit of the King, which the Regent took care to spread in all places, was therein of great service to her; many who did not promise themselves

much good from the appearance of royalty, did not hesitate to accept a pardon, which was offered to them perhaps for the last time. Among those who received private letters of this nature were Egmont and the Prince of Orange. Both had complained to the King of the evil reports with which persons in Spain had sought to brand their good name, and to make their intentions suspected; Egmont in particular had with the honest simplicity, which was peculiar to him, required the monarch, only to point out to him, what he particularly desired, to determine the particular action, by which his favour could be obtained and zeal in his service evinced. He could not in any manner better refute his traducers, the King caused it to be stated in reply to him through the President von Tyssenacque, than by the most perfect submission to the royal orders, which had been drawn up with so much clearness and precision, that no further exposition of them was required nor any particular instruction. It was the part of the Sovereign to deliberate, to examine and to appoint; it behoved the subject to obey unconditionally the will of his Sovereign; the honour of the latter consisted in his obedience. It did not become a member to hold itself wiser than its head. He was assuredly blamed, for not having done his utmost, to curb the unruliness of the sectarians; but it even yet stood in his power, to make up what he had neglected, by at least maintaining peace

and order until the actual arrival of the King. In punishing the Count of Egmont with reproofs like a disobedient child, the King treated him in accordance with his knowledge of his character; against his friend it was necessary to call in the aid of art and deceit. Orange, too, had mentioned in his letter the ill suspicions, which the King entertained of his loyalty and attachment, but not like Egmont in the vain hope of removing this suspicion from him, which he had long abandoned, but in order to pass from these complaints to the request that he would allow him to resign his offices. — He had before often made thi request to the Regent, but always received from her a refusal with the strongest assurance of her regard. The King also, to whom he had last addressed this application direct, returned him now the same answer, which was graced with the same strong assurances of his satisfaction and gratitude. In particular he testified to him the highest satisfaction with the services, which he had lately rendered to him in Antwerp, lamented much, that the private affairs of the Prince (from which the latter had borrowed his main pretence for demanding his dismissal) should have fallen into such disorder, but ended with the declaration, that it was impossible for him to dispense with a servant of such importance in a crisis, when the number of good servants rather required to be increased than diminished. He had thought, he added, that the Prince entertained a better opinion of him,

than to believe him capable of the weakness of giving credit to the groundless talk of certain persons, who were friends neither to the Prince nor to himself. In order at the same time to give him a proof of his sincerity, he complained to him in confidence of his brother, the Count of Nassau, pretended to ask his advice in the matter and finally expressed a wish to have the Count removed for a period from the Netherlands.

But Philip had here to do with a head which was superior to him in cunning. The Prince of Orange had for a long time held watch over him and his Privy Council in Madrid and Segovia, through a host of spies who reported to him all that was done there worthy of notice. The Court of this most secret of all despots had become accessible to his intriguing spirit and his money; in this manner he had gained possession of several letters, which the Regent had secretly written to Madrid, and in her own handwriting, and had caused them, to be circulated in triumph in Brussels and in a measure under her own eyes, in so much that she herself, seeing with astonishment here in every body's hands, what she thought to be preserved with so much care, entreated the King for the future to destroy her despatches immediately. William's vigilance did not restrict itself simply to the Court of Spain, he had placed spies in France and even further, and some even charge upon him that the means, by which he succeeded in gaining his intelligence,

were not always the most innocent. But the most important disclosure was made to him by an intercepted letter of the Spanish Ambassador in France, Francis von Alava, to the Dutchess, in which the letter descanted on the fair opportunity which was now afforded to the King through the guilt of the Netherlandish people, of establishing an arbitrary power in that country. He therefore advised her, to deceive the nobles now through the very arts, which they had hitherto employed against herself and to secure them through smooth words, and an obliging behaviour. The King he concluded, who knew the nobles to be the concealed springs of all the troubles hitherto, would take good care to lay hands upon them in his own good time, as well as the two, whom he already had in Spain; and who would no more escape him, and he had sworn to give an example in them, which should horrify the whole of Christendom, if he even staked thereon the whole of his hereditary dominions. This piece of evil intelligence was strongly corroborated by the letters, which Bergen and Montigny wrote from Spain and in which they bitterly complained of the slighting behaviour of the Grantees and the altered deportment of the monarch towards them, and Orange now fully perceived, what he had to expect from the fair assurances of the King.


(1566.) The letter of the minister Alava, together with some others, which were dated

king has a very doubtful opinion of our zeal in his service, and believes he has cause to distrust our loyalty, and for this, it appears to me, we have given only too much occasion. And it is my serious purpose by redoubling my zeal to improve his opinion of me, and through my future behaviour, to extinguish, if possible, the distrust which my actions hitherto may have brought upon me. And how could I tear myself from the arms of my numerous and dependent family, in order to wander as an exile at foreign Courts, a burthen to every one who received me, the slave of every one who condescended to assist me, a servant of foreigners, in order to escape a slight degree of constraint at home? Never can the monarch act unkindly towards a servant, who was once beloved, and dear to him, and who has earned a well grounded claim to his gratitude. Never shall I be persuaded that he, who entertained such favorable, such gracious sentiments towards his Netherlandish people, and has given me such emphatic, such solemn assurances of them, can now devise such tyrannical schemes against them. If we do but restore to the country its former repose, chastise the rebels, and re-establish the Catholic form of worship, then, believe me, that no more will be heard of Spanish troops; and this it is, to which I now invite you all by my counsel and my example and to which also already the most of our brethren incline. I, for my part, fear no-

thing from the anger of the king. My conscience acquits me; my fate rests upon his justice and his clemency." In vain Nassau, Hoorn and Orange laboured to shake his resolution, and to open his eyes to the near and inevitable danger. Egmont was really attached to the king; the remembrance of his favors and of his obliging behaviour, which accompanied them, lived still in his recollection. The attentions with which he had distinguished him above all his friends, had not failed of their effect. It was more from false shame, than from party spirit, that he had defended the cause of his countrymen against him; more from temperament and natural kindness of heart, than from tried principles, that he had opposed the severe measures of the government. The love of the nation which venerated him as its idol, carried away his vanity. Too vain to renounce a name, which sounded to him so pleasingly, he had been compelled to do some thing to deserve it; but a single look at his family, a harsh name under which his conduct was pointed out, a dangerous inference, which was drawn from it, the mere sound of Crime terrified him from his selfdelusion and scared him hurriedly back to his duty.

Orange's whole plan was shipwrecked when Egmont withdrew. Egmont possessed the hearts of the people and the entire confidence of the army, without which it was utterly impossible to undertake anything effective. They

had reckoned with so much certainty upon him; his unexpected declaration rendered the whole meeting nugatory. They separated without having come to any determination. All who had met in Dendermonde were expected in the Council of State in Brussels; but Egmont alone repaired thither. The Regent wished to sift him regarding the conference which had been held; but she extracted nothing from him further, than the letter of Alava, of which he had taken a copy with him; and which with the bitterest reproofs he laid before her. At first she changed colour at sight of it, but she soon recovered herself and declared boldly that it was a forgery. "How can this letter," she said, "really come from Alava, when I miss none, and he, who pretends to have intercepted it, would certainly not have spared the other letters? Nay, how can it be true, when not a single packet has failed me as yet, nor a single despatch not come to hand? And how can it be thought that the king would have made an Alava master of a secret, which he has not communicated even to me?"



CIVIL WAR.

(1566) Meanwhile the Regent hastened, to avail herself of the advantage, which the schism amongst the Nobles gave her, in order to complete the ruin of the League, which already tottered through internal dissensions. She drew without loss of time troops from Germany, which Duke Eric of Brunswick held in readiness for her, increased the cavalry and raised five regiments of Walloons, over which the Counts of Mansfeld, of Megen, of Aremberg, and others received the chief command. To the Prince of Orange, too, it was requisite to confide troops, in order to avoid insulting him in the most marked manner, and so much the more as the Provinces of which he was Governor required them most urgently; but the precaution was used of joining with him a Colonel, named Waldenfinger, who watched all his steps, and could thwart his measures if they appeared dangerous. To Count Egmont, the Clergy in Flanders paid by contribution

40,000 gold florins, in order to maintain 1500 men of which he distributed a portion in the places where danger was most apprehended. Every Governor was obliged to increase his military force, and to provide himself with ammunition. These preparations which were made in all places and with energy left no doubt remaining, what way the Regent intended to adopt for the future. Secure of her superiority and certain of this important support, she now ventured to alter her former demeanour and to employ quite another language with the rebels. She ventured to interpret in a purely arbitrary manner, the concessions which she had made to the protestants only through fear and necessity, and to restrict all the privileges which she had tacitly granted them to the mere permission for preaching. All their other religious exercises and rites, which if the former was granted, appeared to be understood of themselves, were declared by new edicts not to be allowed, and offenders were proceeded against as traitors. It was permitted to the Protestants, to think differently from the ruling church regarding the sacrament, but to receive it differently was a crime; baptism, marriage, interment after their fashion were prohibited under pain of death. It was a cruel mockery to allow them their religion and forbid them the exercise of it; but this new artifice of the Regent to free herself from her pledged word, was worthy of the pusillanimity, with

which she had allowed that word to be extorted from her. She took occasion from the most trifling innovations, from the most insignificant transgressions, to interrupt the preachings; several of the preachers were, under the pretext that they had performed their office in some other place, than that which was appointed to them, brought to trial and some of them even hanged. The Regent on more than one occasion declared aloud, that the Confederates had taken unfair advantage of her fear, and that she did not conceive herself bound by a contract, which had been extorted from her by threats.

Amongst all the Netherlandish towns which had participated in the insurrection of the Iconoclasts, the Regent had trembled most for the town of Valenciennes in Hainault. In none of them all was the party of the Calvinists so powerful, as in this, and the spirit of rebellion through which the province of Hainault had always made itself conspicuous above all the rest, appeared to dwell here as in its native place. The propinquity of France, to which, as well through language, as manners, this town appeared far more closely to belong than to the Netherlands, had been the cause of its being governed from the first with greater mildness but also with more caution, from which it only so much the more learned to feel its own importance. Already at the last outbreak of the church desecrators but little had been wanting, for it to have surrendered itself to

the Huguenôts, with whom it maintained the closest understanding and the slightest incitement might renew this danger. Hence amongst all the Netherlandish towns Valenciennes was the first, for which the Regent destined a strong garrison so soon as she was placed in a position to give one to it. Philip of Noircarmes, Baron of St. Aldegonde, Governor of Hainault in the place of the absent Marquis of Bergen, had received this charge and appeared at the head of an army before its walls. Deputies came to meet him on the part of the magistrate from the town, to petition against the garrison, because the Protestant citizens, who were the superior number, had declared against it. Noircarmes acquainted them with the will of the Regent, and gave them the choice between admitting the garrison or being besieged. He told them that more than four squadrons of horse and six companies of foot should not be imposed upon the town; and for this he would give them his son as a hostage. When these terms were laid before the Magistrate, who for his part was much inclined to accept them, the preacher Peregrine Le Grange, the Apostle and idol of the people, to whom it was necessarily of importance, to obstruct a submission of which he would become the victim, appeared at the head of his followers and by his powerful eloquence excited the people to reject the conditions. When this answer was brought back to Noircarmes, he, contrary to all law of

nations, caused the envoys to be placed in irons, and carried them away with him as prisoners; he was, however, compelled by order of the Regent to set them free again. The Regent, instructed by secret orders from Madrid to exercise as much forbearance as possible, caused the town to be repeatedly summoned to receive the garrison destined for it; when it, however, obstinately persisted in its refusal, it was declared by a public edict to be in rebellion and Noircarmes received orders to besiege it in form. All the other provinces were forbidden to assist this rebellious town with advice, money, or arms. All the property contained in it was confiscated. In order to let it see the war, before it began in earnest, and to give it time for rational reflection, Noircarmes drew together troops from all Hainault and Cambray (1566) took possession of St. Amant, and placed garrisons in all adjacent places.

The line of conduct adopted towards Valenciennes allowed all the other towns which were similarly situated, to infer the fate which was intended for them also, and at once put the whole League in motion. An army of the Geusen between 3000 and 4000 strong, which was hastily collected from the rabble of fugitives and the remaining bands of the Iconoclasts showed itself in the territories of Tournay and Lille, in order to secure these two towns and to annoy the enemy before Valenciennes. The commandant of Lille

was fortunate enough to maintain the place by routing a detachment of this army which, under an understanding with the Protestants of that town, had made an attempt to get possession of it. At the same time the army of the Geusen, which was uselessly wasting the time at Lannoy, was surprised by Noircarmes and almost entirely annihilated. The few, who with desperate courage forced their way through, threw themselves into the town of Tournay which was immediately summoned by the victor, to open its gates and admit a garrison. Its prompt obedience obtained for it a milder fate. Noircarmes contented himself with abolishing the Protestant Consistory there, with banishing the preachers, with bringing the leaders of the rebels to punishment and again re-establishing the Catholic worship which he found nearly entirely suppressed. After he had given it a safe Catholic as Governor and had left a sufficient garrison in it, he again returned with his victorious army before Valenciennes in order to continue the siege.

That town, confident in its strength, actively prepared for defence, firmly resolved, to allow things to come to extremity. They had not neglected to furnish themselves with the ammunition of war and with provisions for a long siege; all who could carry arms, the artisans even not excluded, became soldiers; the houses before the town and especially the cloisters were pulled down that the besiegers might not avail

themselves of them against the place. The few adherents of the crown, awed by the multitude, were silent; no Catholic durst venture to stir himself. Anarchy and rebellion had taken the place of good order and the fanaticism of a foolhardy priest gave laws. The male population was numerous, their courage strengthened by despair, their reliance firm that the siege would be raised, and their hatred against the catholic religion excited to the highest pitch. Many had no mercy to expect, all abhorred the general thralldom of an imperious garrison. Noircarmes, whose army had become formidable through the reinforcements which streamed to it from all quarters and was abundantly furnished with all the requisites for a long blockade, once more attempted to prevail on the town by fair means, but in vain. He therefore caused the trenches to be opened and prepared to invest the place.

The position of the Protestants had meanwhile grown worse in the very same degree as that of the Regent had acquired strength. The League of the nobles had gradually melted away to a third of what it was. Some of its most important defenders, as for instance Count Egmont, had again gone over to the king; the pecuniary contributions which had been so confidently reckoned upon turned out very scanty; the zeal of the party began perceptibly to cool, and it was necessary too, with the close of the

fine season, to discontinue the public preachings, which had hitherto been continued to be performed. All this together induced the declining party, to moderate its demands and to try all innocent means before it ventured on extremities. In a general synod of the Protestants, which was held with this object in Antwerp, and which some of the Confederates too, attended, it was resolved to send deputies to the Regent, to remonstrate with her against this breach of faith, and to remind her of her compact. Brederode undertook this office, but was obliged to submit to a harsh and disgraceful rebuff, and was shut out of Brussels. He had recourse to a written memorial, in which he complained in the name of the whole League, that the Dutchess had by violating her word falsified in sight of all the Protestants the security given by the League, on which all of them had laid down their arms, and had destroyed, all the good which the Confederates had done; that she had sought to degrade the League in the eyes of the people, had excited discord among its members, and had caused many of them to be persecuted as criminals. He called upon her, to recall her late ordinances, through which the Protestants were deprived of the free exercise of their religion, but before every thing to raise the siege of Valenciennes, to disband the troops newly enlisted, on which condition alone the League would be responsible for the general tranquillity.

To this the Regent replied in a tone, which was very different from her previous moderation. «Who these Confederates are, who address me in this memorial, is, indeed, a mystery to me. The Confederates with whom I had to do, for aught I know to the contrary have dispersed. All at least cannot participate in this statement of grievances, for I myself know many, who, satisfied in all their demands, have returned to their duty. Whoever it may be, however, who without authority and right, and without name addresses me, he has at least given a very false interpretation to my word, if he thence infers that I have guaranteed to the Protestants religious liberty. No one can be ignorant what difficulty I found in permitting the preachings in the places where they have of their own accord arisen, and this surely cannot be counted for a concession of freedom in religion? Is it likely that I should have imagined the idea of protecting these illegal consistories, of tolerating this State within a State? Could I have forgotten myself so far as to grant the authority of law to an objectionable sect; as to overturn all order in the Church and in the Republic and so abominably blaspheme my holy religion? Look to him, who has given you this permission, but you must not argue with me. You accuse me of having violated this agreement, which gave impunity and security to you? The past I have looked over, but not what may be

done in future. No advantage was to be taken of any of you on account of your petition of last April, and that, to the best of my knowledge, has not been done; but whoever offends afresh against the Majesty of the king must bear the consequence of his crime. In fine, how can you presume to remind me of an agreement, which you have been the first to break? At whose instigation were the churches plundered, the images of the Saints thrown down, and the towns hurried into rebellion? Who formed alliances with foreign powers, set on foot illegal enlistments, and collected unlawful taxes from the subjects of the king? For this reason have I drawn together troops, for this I have increased the severity of the Edicts. Whoever asks me, again to lay down my arms, can never mean well to his country and his king, and if ye love yourselves look to it that your own actions acquit you, instead of judging mine.»

All hope of the Confederates for an amicable adjustment sank with this high toned declaration. Without being conscious of a powerful support, the Regent could not employ such language. An army was in the field, the enemy was before Valenciennes, the members who were the heart, of the League had abandoned it, and the Regent required unconditional submission. Their cause was now so bad, that an open resistance could not make it worse. If they gave themselves up defenceless into the hands of their exasperated

Sovereign, their destruction was certain; but the appeal to arms could at least make it a matter of doubt; they, therefore, chose the latter, and began seriously to take steps for their defence. In order to gain a right to the assistance of the German Protestants, Louis of Nassau wished to persuade the towns of Amsterdam, Antwerp, Tournay and Valenciennes to accede to the confession of Augsburg, and in this manner to unite themselves more closely in their religion; a proposal which was never carried into execution, because the religious hatred of the Calvinists against their evangelical brethren exceeded, if possible, that which they bore to popery. Nassau began seriously to negotiate for supplies in France, in the Palatinate, and in Saxony. The Count of Bergen fortified his castles; Brederode threw himself with a small force into his strong town of Viane on the Leck, over which he claimed the rights of sovereignty, and which he hastily placed in a state of defence, in order here to await a reinforcement from the League and the issue of Nassau's negotiations. The flag of war was now raised; every where the drum was heard to beat; in all places troops were seen on the march, contributions being collected, and soldiers enlisted. The Agents of each party often met in the same place, and hardly had the Collectors and recruiting officers of the Regent quitted a town, when it had to

endure the same acts of oppression from the agents of the League.

(1566.) From Valenciennes the Regent directed her attention to Herzogenbusch, in which town the Iconoclasts had committed new excesses and the party of the Protestants had gained a strong superiority. In order to prevail on the citizens in a peaceable manner to receive a garrison, she sent thither as ambassador the Chancellor Scheiff from Brabant with Counsellor Merode of Petersheim, whom she appointed Governor of the town, which officers were to secure the place in some judicious manner, and require from the citizens a new oath of allegiance. At the same time the Count of Megen, who was in the neighbourhood with a body of troops, was ordered, to advance towards the town, in order to support the two envoys in effecting their commission, and to afford the means of throwing in a garrison immediately. But Brederode, who obtained information of this in Viane, sent thither one of his creatures, a certain Anton von Bomberg, a hot Calvinist, who, however, was known for a brave soldier, in order to raise the courage of his party in that town and to frustrate the designs of the Regent. This Bomberg succeeded in getting possession of the letters, which the Chancellor brought with him from the Dutchess and managed to replace them by counterfeit ones, which exasperated the

citizens through their harsh and imperious language. At the same time he contrived to throw suspicion on both the ambassadors of the Dutchess, as having evil designs against the town, in which he succeeded so well with the mob, that in their mad fury they even laid hands on the Ambassadors and placed them in confinement. He himself advanced at the head of 800 men, who had made him their leader, against the Count of Megen, who was moving in order of battle against the town, and gave him such an ill reception with heavy artillery, that Megen was compelled to retire without accomplishing any thing. The Regent sent an officer of justice to demand the release of her ambassadors and in case of refusal to threaten the town with siege; but Bomberg with his party surrounded the Townhall and forced the magistrate to deliver over to him the key of the town. The messenger of the Regent was ridiculed and dismissed, and an answer sent through him, that it would depend upon Brederode's orders, what would be done with the prisoners. The herald, who stayed outside before the town, now appeared to declare war against her, which however the Chancellor prevented.

After his futile attempt on Herzogenbusch the Count of Megen threw himself into Utrecht, in order to prevent the execution of a design, which Count Brederode wanted to carry out against that town. As it had suffered much from

the army of the Confederates, which was encamped not far off, near Viane, it received Megen with open arms as its protector, and conformed to all the alterations which he made in the religious worship. He then immediately caused a redoubt to be thrown up on the bank of the Leck, from which he could command Viane. Brederode, who was not disposed, to await him in that town, quitted that rendezvous with the best part of his army and hastened to Amsterdam.

However unprofitably the Prince of Orange appeared to be losing his time in Antwerp during these operations he was busily employed in this apparent repose. At his instigation the League had commenced recruiting, and Brederode had fortified his castles, for which purpose he himself presented him with three cannons, which he had cast at Utrecht. His eye watched over all the movements of the Court, and he warned the League of every design which was formed against this or that town. But his chief object appeared to be to get possession of the principal places in the districts he governed, to which end he secretly assisted Brederode's plans against Utrecht and Amsterdam with all his power. The most important place was the Zealand island of Walcheren, where the King was expected to land; and he now planned a scheme to surprise this place, the conduct of which was undertaken by one of the Confederate nobles, an intimate friend

of the Prince of Orange, John of Marnix, Baron of Thoulouse, Philip of Aldegonde's brother. (1567) Thoulouse maintained a secret understanding with the late mayor of Middelburg, Peter Haak, by which he was to gain an opportunity of throwing a garrison into Middelburg and Flushing; but the recruiting, which was set on foot in Antwerp for this undertaking, could not be carried on so quietly, as not to excite the suspicions of the Magistrate. In order therefore to lull the latter and at the same time promote the project, the Prince caused it to be publicly proclaimed by the herald to all foreign soldiers and strangers, who were in the service of the State, or otherwise employed in business, that they were to quit the town without delay. He could, say his adversaries, by closing the gates, have easily made himself master of all these suspected soldiers, but he expelled them from the town, in order to drive them so much the more quickly to the place of their destination. They were then immediately embarked on the Scheld and transported to before Rammekens; as however warning of their design had been given in Flushing prior to their arrival by a market-vessel of Antwerp which ran in a little before them, they were forbidden to enter the port. They found the same difficulty in Arnemuiden near Middelburg, in which town the non-catholics vainly exerted themselves to raise an insurrection in their favour. Thoulouse, therefore, without having accomplished

anything, had his ships turned about and sailed back down the Scheld as far as Osterweel, a quarter of a mile from Antwerp, where he disembarked his people and encampèd on the shore, with the intention of getting reinforced here from Antwerp, and to refresh by his presence the courage of his party, which had been cast down by the Magistrate. By the aid of the calvinistic clergy, who recruited for him in the town, his little army increased daily, so that at last he began to be formidable to the Antwerpians, whose whole territory he laid waste. The Magistrate wished to attack him here with the town militia, which, however, the Prince of Orange contrived to prevent under the pretext, that the town could not be stripped of soldiers.

Meanwhile the Regent had in haste brought together a small army, which under the command of Philip of Launoy moved out of Brussels by forced marches against him. At the same time the Count of Megen managed to shut up and employ the army of the Geusen at Viane, so that it could neither hear of these movements, nor hasten to the assistance of its confederates. Launoy attacked by surprise the dispersed crowds, which had gone out to plunder, and destroyed them in one terrible carnage. Thoulouse threw himself with the small remnant of his troops into a country house, which had served him as his headquarters, and defended himself for a long time with the courage of despair, until Launoy, who

could not dislodge him in any other manner, caused the house to be set on fire. The few who escaped the flames, fell on the swords of the enemy, or perished in the Scheld. Thoulouse himself preferred to be destroyed in the flames to falling into the hands of the victor. This victory, which swept off more than a thousand of the enemy, was purchased by the conqueror cheaply enough, for he did not lose more than two men in his whole army. Three hundred who surrendered themselves alive, were, because a sally from Antwerp was dreaded, cut down without mercy on the spot. Before the battle commenced, no anticipation of it was entertained in Antwerp. The Prince of Orange who early got information of it, had used the precaution, of causing the bridge, which unites the town with Osterweel, to be destroyed the day before, in order, as he gave out, that the Calvinists of the town, should not be tempted to join the army of Thoulouse, but more probably that the Catholics might not attack the army of the Geusen general in the rear, or that Launoy too if he was victorious might not force his way into the town. On the very same grounds the gates also were shut by his orders, and the inhabitants, who could not comprehend the meaning of all these preparatiours, hovered in uncertainty between curiosity and fear until the sound of artillery from Osterweel, announced to them what was going on there. In clamorous crowds they all now ran to the walls and upon

the ramparts, where as the wind divided the smoke from the contending armies the whole spectacle of a battle was presented to them. Both armies were so near to the town that they could discern their flags and clearly distinguish the voices of the victors and the vanquished. More terrible even than the battle was the sight which this town now presented. Each of the conflicting armies had its supporters and its enemies on the ramparts. All, that went on beneath, roused here above, exultation and dismay; the issue of the conflict appeared to decide the fate of every spectator. Every movement on the field of battle could be read in the faces of the Antwerpians: defeat and triumph, the terror of those who yield, and the fury of the victor. Here a painful and vain endeavour to support those who are giving way, to prevail on those who fly to stand; there an equally futile desire, to overtake them, to slay them, to extirpate them. Now the Geusen fly and ten thousand men rejoice; Thoulouse's last place and refuge is in flames, and twenty thousand citizens of Antwerp are consumed with him.

But the bewilderment of the first alarm soon gives place to the frantic desire to assist, to revenge. Shrieking aloud, wringing her hands and with dishevelled hair the widow of the slain general rushes amidst the crowds, to implore pity and revenge. Excited by Hermann, their Apostle, the Calvinists fly to arms, determined

to revenge their brethren, or to perish with them; without reflection, without plan or leader, guided by nothing but their anguish, their delirium, they rush to the Red Gate of the city, which leads to the field of battle; but there is no egress! the gate is shut and the foremost crowds recoil on those that follow. Thousands and thousands are collected, a dreadful crush ensues upon the Meer bridge. We are betrayed, we are prisoners, is the general cry! Destruction to the Papists, death to him who has betrayed us! a sullen murmur portentous of an insurrection runs through the whole multitude. They begin to suspect, that all that has taken place has been set on foot by the Catholics, to destroy the Calvinists. They had slain their defenders, they could now fall upon the defenceless. With fatal celerity this suspicion spreads through the whole of Antwerp. Now they think they have a light regarding the past, and they fear somewhat still worse in the back ground; a frightful distrust gains possession of every mind. Each party dreads the other; every one sees an enemy in his neighbour; the mystery increases this alarm and horror; a fearful condition for so populous a town, where every accidental concourse instantly becomes tumult, every idea started among them becomes a rumour, every small spark a blazing flame, and all passions are more furiously inflamed by the force of collision. All, who bore the name of Calvinists, were

roused by this report. Fifteen thousand of this party place themselves in possession of the Meer bridge, and plant heavy artillery upon it, taken by force from the arsenal; the same thing happens on another bridge; their number makes them formidable, the town is in their hands; to escape an imaginary danger, they bring all Antwerp to the brink of ruin.

Immediately on the commencement of the tumult the Prince of Orange hastened to the Meer bridge, where he courageously forced his way through the raging crowd, commanded peace, and entreated to be heard. At the other bridge the Count of Hoogstraten, accompanied by the Bürgermeister Strahlen, made the same attempt; as, however, he was not possessed in an equal degree either of the popular favour or of eloquence, he directed the raging crowds, who were too violent for him to manage, to the prince, towards whom all Antwerp now furiously thronged. The gate, he endeavoured to explain to them, was shut for no other reason, but to keep off the victor, whoever he might be, from the city, which would otherwise become the prey of the soldiers. In vain! the frantie bands did not listen to him and one of the most daring among them even dared to aim his fire arms at him and to call him a traitor. With tumultuous shouts they demanded from him the key of the Red Gate, which he found himself at last compelled to give

into the hands of the preacher Herrmann. But, he added with happy presence of mind, they must take heed, what they were doing; in the suburbs 600 horse of the enemy were waiting to receive them. This invention, which the emergency and his anxiety suggested to Orange, was not so far removed from the truth, as he himself perhaps may have imagined; for the victorious general had no sooner perceived the commotion in Antwerp than he caused his whole cavalry to mount, in order to break into the town under favour of the disturbance. I, at least, continued the Prince of Orange will secure myself in time, and he who follows my example will save himself repentance. These words, opportunely spoken, and immediately accompanied by the act, had their effect. Those, who stood nearest him, followed him, and the nearest again followed them, so that at last the few, who had already hastened out, when they saw no one coming after them, lost the desire of coping with the six hundred horse alone. All now posted themselves upon the Meer bridge, where they placed watches and outposts, and the night was passed tumultuously under arms.

The town of Antwerp was now threatened with the most fearful carnage and complete pillage. In this pressing emergency Orange assembled an extraordinary Senate, to which the best disposed citizens of the four nations were called. If they wished, said he, to keep under

the insolence of the Calvinists, they must oppose them with an army, prepared to meet them. It was, therefore resolved to arm with speed the Catholic inhabitants of the town, natives, Italians and Spaniards, and if possible, to bring over the Lutherans also to their party. The haughtiness of the Calvinists, who, proud of their wealth, and confident in their overwhelming numbers, treated every other religious party with contempt, had already long made the Lutherans their enemies, and the exasperation of these two Protestant churches against one another, was of a more implacable kind, than the hatred in which they joined against the ruling church. From this mutual jealousy the Magistrate had drawn the essential advantage of curbing one party by the other, but especially the Calvinists, from whose growth the most was to be feared. For this reason he had tacitly taken into his protection the Lutherans, as the weaker part, and the most peaceable of the two, and spiritual teachers were even invited for them from Germany, who were to keep in continual exercise their mutual hatred by controversial sermons. He encouraged the Lutherans in the vain idea, that the king thought more favourably of their religious creed, and exhorted them not by any means to stain their good cause, by an understanding with the Calvinists. It was not, therefore, difficult to bring about for the moment a union between the Catholics and Lutherans, as

the object was to keep down such detested rivals. With dawn of day an army was opposed to the Calvinists, which was far superior to theirs. At the head of this army the eloquence of Orange began, to have far greater effect and to find a far more easy entrance. The Calvinists, although in possession of the arms and the artillery, alarmed at the superior numbers of their enemies, were the first to send envoys, and offer to treat for an amicable adjustment of differences, which by Orange's skill was concluded to the satisfaction of all parties. Immediately after the proclamation of the same the Spaniards and Italians in the town laid down their arms. They were followed by the Calvinists and these by the Catholics; last of all this was done by the Lutherans.

Two days and two nights Antwerp had continued in this alarming state. Already barrels of powder had been brought by the Catholics and placed under the Meer bridge, in order to blow into the air the whole army of the Calvinists, who were in possession of it; the same had been done in other places by the latter against the Catholics. The destruction of the town hung on a single moment, and it was Orange's presence of mind which saved it.

(1567.) Noircarmes with his army of Walloons still lay before Valenciennes which, in firm reliance on the protection of the Geusen, persisted against all the representations of the

Regent in remaining unmoved, and in rejecting every idea of surrender. An express order of the Court forbade the royalist general from acting with energy, before he reinforced himself with fresh troops from Germany. The king whether from forbearance or fear, declined with abhorrence the violent measure of storming the place, by which the innocent would be necessarily involved in the fate of the guilty, and the loyal subject would be treated like an enemy. As, however, the confidence of the besieged was each day augmented and emboldened by the inactivity of the enemy, they even ventured to annoy him by frequent sallies and to set fire to some cloisters before the town and return home with the plunder; as the time, uselessly lost before this town, could be better employed by the rebels and their allies, Noircarmes besought the Dutchess to obtain permission from the king for the storming of the place. The answer came back more quickly than Philip was ever wont to reply: as yet they were to content themselves with simply preparing the implements for the storm, and before they actually commenced, they were first, for a period, to allow the terror of it to have it's effect; if, however, the capitulation did not follow, the king then permitted the storm, but with the greatest possible regard for the life of every one. Before the Regent proceeded to this extreme measure she empowered the Count of Egmont, together with the

Duke of Arschot, to treat once more with the rebels amicably. Both conferred with the deputies of the town and omitted nothing to tear them from their existing delusion. They disclosed to them that Thoulouse was defeated and with him the whole support of the besieged had fallen; that the Count of Megen had cut off the army of the Geusen from the town and that they had maintained themselves so long only through the king's forbearance. They offered a full pardon for the past. It should be free to every one to defend his innocence before whatever tribunal he wished, every one who did not desire this, should be permitted within the space of fourteen days to quit the town with all his effects. Nothing was required of them but to admit the garrison. To give them time to meditate on these terms an armistice of three days was granted to them. When the deputies returned to the town they found their fellow citizens less disposed than ever to an accommodation, because meanwhile reports of a new enlisting of troops by the Geusen had been spread. Thoulouse, it was insisted had conquered, and a powerful army was advancing to relieve the place. This confidence went so far, that they even ventured to break the armistice and to fire upon the besiegers. At last the Magistrate with much labour brought matters so far that twelve of the Counsellors were sent into the camp with the following conditions. The Edict, by which Va-

lenciennes had been accused of the crime of treason and declared hostile, should be recalled, the confiscated goods restored, and the prisoners on both sides should be again restored to liberty. The garrison should not enter the town before every one, who thought good, placed himself and his property in security; they should pledge themselves not to molest the inhabitants in any manner and their expenses should be paid by the king.

Noircarmes answered these conditions with indignation, and was on the point of illtreating the Deputies. If they had not come, he told them, to give up the town to him, they should return back on the spot, or expect that he would send them home, with their hands tied behind their backs. They threw the blame on the obstinacy of the Calvinists and entreated him with tears to keep them in the camp, because they did not wish to have any thing more to do with their rebellious fellowcitizens, or to be mixed up in their fate. They even clasped Egmont's knees to gain his intercession, but Noircarmes remained deaf to all their entreaties, and the sight of the chains which were brought to them, drove them unwillingly back to Valenciennes. It was necessity not severity, which imposed this harsh procedure upon the general of the enemy. The detention of the ambassadors had already once before drawn upon him the reprimand of the Dutchess; those in the town would not have failed to have attributed

their present nonreturn to the same cause, as that of their former absence. Nor durst he deprive the town of the small residue of well disposed citizens, nor permit a blind, foolhardy mob to be master of its destiny. Egmont was so incensed at the bad result of his embassy, that he himself in the night following rode round the town, reconnoitred its fortifications, and returned well satisfied, having convinced himself that it was no longer tenable.

Valenciennes stretches from a gentle acclivity into a straight and level plain and enjoys a situation as strong as it is delightful. On one side bordered by the Scheld and a smaller river, on the other protected by deep ditches, strong walls and towers, it appears capable of defying every attack. But Noircarmes had remarked some places in the town fosse which had been through neglect permitted to become level with the other ground and of this he availed himself. He drew together all the scattered corps, by which he had hitherto kept the town invested, and during a stormy night carried the suburb of Berg without the loss of a man. He then allotted separate points of attack to the Count of Bossu, the young Charles of Mansfeld and the younger Barlaimont; one of his colonels with the utmost possible speed approached the walls, from which the enemy was driven by a terrible fire. Close before the town and opposite the gate, under the eyes of the besiegers and with very little loss, a bat-

tery was thrown up to an equal height with the fortifications, from which the town was bombarded with an unceasing cannonade for four hours. The Nicolaus tower, on which the besieged had planted some artillery, was among the first which fell, and many perished under its ruins. The guns were directed against all the prominent buildings and a terrible slaughter was made amongst the inhabitants. In a few hours their most important works were destroyed, and in the gate itself so extensive a breach was made, that the besieged, despairing of defending themselves sent in haste two trumpeters to entreat a hearing. This was granted but the storm was continued without intermission. This made the ambassadors demand the more earnestly that the treaty might be concluded, so as to surrender the town upon the same terms, which it had two days before rejected, but the circumstances had now changed and the victor would hear no more of conditions. The unceasing fire left the inhabitants no time to repair the ramparts, which filled the whole fosse of the city with their debris and every where made way for the enemy to enter by the breach. Certain of utter destruction, they surrendered the town with break of day at discretion, after the bombardment had continued six and thirty hours without intermission and 3000 bombs had been thrown into the city. Noircarmes led in his victorious army under strict discipline, and was received by a crowd of women and small

children, who went to meet him, carrying green boughs, and besought his pity. All the citizens were immediately disarmed, the Commandant of the town and his son beheaded; 36 of the most criminal among the rebels, among whom were also La Grange and Guido de Bresse, another Calvinistic preacher, atoned for their obstinacy at the gallows; all the municipal officers lost their situations and the town all its privileges. The Catholic worship was immediately restored in its full dignity, and the Protestant abolished. The Bishops of Arras was obliged to quit his residence in the town, and a strong garrison was made to answer for its future obedience.

(1567.) The fall of Valenciennes, on which place all eyes were turned, was a warning to all the other towns which had similiary offended, and brought no slight increase of awe to the arms of the Regent. Noircarmes followed up his victory, and marched immediately against Mastricht, which surrendered without a blow and received a garrison. Thence he marched towards Tornhut, to awe the towns of Herzogenbusch and Antwerp by his propinquity. His approach terrified the party of the Geusen, who, led by Bomberg, had till then kept the Magistrate under their controul, so much that they quitted the town in haste with their leader. Noircarmes was received without opposition, the ambassadors of the Dutchess immediately set at liberty, and a strong garrison thrown into the place. Cambray

also opened its gates and joyfully recalled its Archbishop, whom the ruling party of the Calvinists had driven from his seat; and he deserved this triumph as he did not stain his entrance with blood. The towns of Ghent also, Ypern and Oudenarde submitted and received garrisons. Gueldres had been almost entirely cleared of the rebels and reduced to obedience by the Count of Megen; the Count of Aremberg had had the like success in Friesland and Gröningen, somewhat later however, and with greater difficulty, because his behaviour wanted consistency and firmness, and because these warlike republicans insisted more pertinaciously on their privileges and trusted in the strength of their position. With the exception of Holland, the faction of the rebels was driven out of all the Provinces; all yielded to the victorious arms of the Dutchess. The courage of the disaffected sunk entirely and nothing was left to them but flight or unconditional submission.



RESIGNATION OF WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

Ever since the establishment of the Geusen League, but more perceptibly since the outbreak of the Iconclasts, the spirit of rebellion and defection of the Provinces amongst the high and lower classes had increased so much; the parties had become so mixed up amongst one another, that the Regent had difficulty, in discriminating her adherents and creatures, and at last hardly knew any longer in whose hands she really was. The distinguishing mark of the suspected and loyal had gradually been lost and lines of demarcation between the two had become less apparent. By the alterations, which she had been obliged to make in the laws, and which were at most only expedients and the emanations of the moment, she had taken from the laws themselves their exactness, their obligatory force, and had given full scope to the arbitrary will of every individual, who interpreted them. Thus it happened at last, that amongst the number and variety

of the interpretations the spirit of the law was lost and the intention of the lawgiver baffled; that in the close connection, which existed between the Protestants and Catholics, between the Geusen and Royalists, and which not unfrequently gave them a common interest, the latter availed themselves of the loophole, which was left open to them through the vagueness of the laws, and by subtle distinctions evaded severity in the discharge of their duties. According to their way of thinking it was enough not to be a declared rebel, not one of the Geusen, or not a heretic, in order to believe themselves authorised to model their functions according to their opinions and to set the most arbitrary limits to their obedience to the King. Without being responsible for it, the Governors, the officers both high and low, the municipal officers of the towns and the commanders of the troops, had become very remiss in their duty, and practised, in dependence upon this impunity, an injurious indulgence towards the rebels and their adherents, which made all the measures of the Regent abortive. This want of reliance in so many important persons in the State had the injurious consequence, that the turbulent reckoned on a far stronger support, than they really had cause for, because they counted every person of their party, who was only a lukewarm adherent of the Court. As this error made them more daring, it was nearly the same thing, as if it had been well founded and the

uncertain vassals of the King were thereby nearly quite as injurious to him, as his declared enemies, without its being possible to employ the same severity against them. This was especially the case with the Prince of Orange, the Counts of Egmont, of Bergen, of Hoogstraten, of Hoorn and several others of the high nobility. The Regent saw the necessity of bringing these doubtful subjects to a declaration, in order either to deprive the rebels of a fancied support, or to unmask the enemies of the King. This was now the more urgently required, as she was obliged to send an army into the field and saw herself compelled to entrust troops to many among them. For this end she caused an oath to be drawn up, by which they bound themselves, to advance the Roman-Catholic faith, to pursue and punish the Iconclasts, and to help in extirpating to the best of their ability all kinds of heresy. They pledged themselves thereby to treat every enemy of the King as their own, and to allow themselves to be employed, against every one, without distinction, whom the Regent in the King's name should mention. Through this oath she hoped, not so much to test their feelings, and still less to secure them; but intended that it might serve her as a legitimate pretext, if they declined taking it, for removing the suspected, and for wresting from their hands a power, which they might abuse, and for bringing them

to punishment if they broke it. This oath was required by the Court from all knights of the Fleece, all State functionaries high and low, all officers and magistrates, all officers of the army, all without distinction to whom any duty in the Republic was entrusted. The Count of Mansfeld was the first, who publicly took it in the Council of State at Brussels; his example was followed by the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Egmont, Megen, and Barlaimont; Hoogstraten and Hoorn endeavoured to evade it in some subtle manner. The former of these two was still offended at a proof of distrust which the Regent had a short time before given him with reference to his governorship of Malines. Under the pretext that Malines could no longer be without its governor, and that the presence of the Count was no less necessary in Antwerp, she had taken from him that Province, and given it to another, whom she could better reckon upon. Hoogstraten expressed his thanks to her, that she had been pleased to release him from one of his burthens, and added that she would complete the obligation, if she would free him from the other also. The Count of Hoorn continued to live, true to his purpose, on one of his estates in the strong town of Weerd, in total retirement from public affairs. As he had quitted the service of the State and thought that he owed nothing more to the Republic or to the King, he

declined the oath, which in his case appears at last to have been waved.

To the Count of Brederode the choice was given either of taking the prescribed oath, or giving up the command of the Squadron, which was entrusted to him. After many fruitless attempts at subterfuge on the ground of his not being invested with any public office in the Republic, he at last resolved upon the latter and thereby escaped perjuring himself.

Vain attempts had been made to prevail on the Prince of Orange to take the oath, who from the suspicion which had long attached to him, seemed more than any other to require this purification, and on account of the great power, which it had been necessary to place in his hands, could be compelled thereto with the greatest appearance of justice. It was not possible to proceed against him with the laconic brevity adopted towards Broderode or the like of him, and the voluntary resignation of all his offices, which he tendered, did not meet the object of the Regent, who foresaw clearly, how dangerous this man would then first become to her, when he found himself independent, and thought that he was no longer obliged to conceal his real sentiments, by any external consideration of character or duty. But the Prince of Orange had ever since that consultation in Dendermonde, irrevocably determined to quit the service of the King of Spain, and till

better days to leave the country itself. A very disheartening experience had taught him, how uncertain the hopes are, which one has been compelled to build on the multitude, and how soon their much promising zeal is gone, if deeds are required from them. An army was in the field, and a far stronger one was, as he knew, approaching under the command of the Duke of Alba — the time for representations was past, it was only at the head of an army that the hope could be entertained, of concluding an advantageous treaty with the Regent and preventing the Spanish general from entering the country. But whence was he to procure this army, while he wanted the necessary money, the soul of all undertakings, while the Protestants had retracted their boastful promises and deserted him in this pressing emergency? * Jealousy and religious hatred, moreover, separated the two protestant

*) How honest the will and how bad the execution was, is shewn by the following example amongst others. Some friends of the national liberty, Catholics as well as Protestants, had solemnly vowed in Amsterdam to subscribe in a common fund the 100th. penny of their estates, until a sum of 11,000 florins should be collected, which would be employed for the use of the common cause. A box with a slit in the lid and protected by three locks was prepared for the reception of this money. When, after the expiration of the prescribed period, it was opened a treasure was discovered of — 700 florins which was given to the hostess of the Count of Brederode in part payment of his unliquidated score! A. G. Univ. Hist. of the N. N. Vol. 3.

churches, and opposed every salutary combination against the common enemy of their faith. The rejection of the Confession of Augsburg by the Calvinists had exasperated all the Protestant princes of Germany against them, so that the powerful protection of that empire was no longer to be thought of. With the Count of Egmont was lost the excellent army of Walloons, which followed with blind devotion the fortunes of their general, who had taught them to conquer at St. Quentin and Gravelines. The outrages which the Iconoclasts had practised on the churches and convents, had again estranged from the League the numerous, wealthy, and powerful class of the Catholic clergy, who before this unlucky episode were already more than half gained over to it; and the Regent daily contrived by her intrigues to deprive the League itself of many of its members.

All these considerations, taken together, induced the Prince to postpone to a more favourable season a project to which the present juncture was not suited, and to leave a country, where his longer stay could not restore anything, but prepared for himself, certain destruction. After intelligence gleaned from so many quarters, after so many proofs of distrust, so many warnings from Madrid he could be no longer doubtful of the sentiments of Philip respecting him. If even he had had any doubt, his uncertainty would soon have been dispelled by the formidable army, which

was being prepared in Spain and which was to have for its leader not the King, as was falsely reported, but, as he better knew, the Duke of Alba, the man who was most opposed to him, and whom he had most cause to fear. The Prince had seen too deeply into Philip's heart, to believe in a sincere reconciliation with that monarch, whose fears he had once awakened. He judged, too, his own conduct too justly to reckon like his friend Egmont, on gratitude from the King for which he had not sown. He could, therefore, expect nought but hostile intentions from him, and prudence counselled him to withdraw himself from their actual outbreak by a timely flight. He had hitherto obstinately rejected the new oath which was required from him, and all the written exhortations of the Regent had been fruitless. At last she sent to him at Antwerp her private secretary Berti, who was to put the matter emphatically to his conscience and to impress upon him all the evil consequences, which so sudden a withdrawal from the royal service, would draw as well upon the country as upon himself in regard to his own good name. Already, she sent him word by her ambassador, his rejection of the oath demanded from him had cast a shade upon his honor and given to the general voice, which accused him of an understanding with the rebels, an appearance of truth which this violent retirement from office would raise to absolute certainty. It was for the Sovereign to

discharge his servants, but it did not behove the servant to abandon his Sovereign. The envoy of the Regent found the Prince in his palace at Antwerp, already, as it appeared, dead to the public service and immersed in his private concerns. The prince told him in the presence of Hoogstraten, that he had refused to take the required oath, because he could not remember, that a proposition of that nature had ever been made to a Governor before him: because he had already, once for all, bound himself to the King and therefore through this new oath he would tacitly acknowledge that he had broken the first. He had refused to take it because a prior oath enjoined him to protect the rights and privileges of the country, but he could not tell whether this new oath would not impose upon him actions which contravened the first; because in this new oath, which made it his duty to serve against every one without distinction, who should be named to him, not even the Emperor, his feudal lord, was excepted, against whom, however, he as his vassal, could not make war. He had refused to take it, because this oath might impose upon him the giving up to butchery, his friends and relations, his own sons, nay even his wife, who was a Lutheran. According to this oath he must lend himself to everything, which it occurred to the King to exact from him; but the King might even exact from him things, at which he shuddered, and the severity which was now used

and had been all along exercised against the Protestants, had been long revolting to his feelings. This oath was repugnant to his feelings as a man, and he could not take it. In conclusion he dropped the name of the Duke of Alba, with marks of bitterness, and was then immediately silent.

All these objections were answered point by point by Berti. Such an oath had never been required from a Governor before him, because the Provinces had never been similarly circumstanced. This oath was not required, because the Governors had broken the first, but in order to remind them more vividly of that former oath and to freshen their activity in these emergent circumstances. This oath would not impose upon him anything, which offended against the rights and privileges of the country, for the King had sworn to observe these privileges and rights as well as the Prince of Orange. In this oath there was no reference whatever to a war with the Emperor, nor against any sovereign to whom the prince was related, and if he really scrupled upon this point, a distinct clause should readily be inserted which should expressly exclude the same. Care would be taken to spare him any duties which were repugnant to his feelings as a man, and no power on earth would compel him to act against his wife or against his children. Berti would then have passed on to the last point, which related to the Duke of Alba, but the Prince, who did not wish to have this

part of his discourse canvassed, interrupted him. «The king would come to the Netherlands,» he said, «and he knew the king. The king would not endure, that one of his servants had wedded a Lutheran, and he had, therefore resolved to go himself and his whole family into voluntary banishment, before he was obliged to submit to this destiny by compulsion. But,» he concluded, «he would always conduct himself, wherever he might be, as a subject of the king.» One sees how far fetched the motives for this flight were which the Prince adduced, that he might not touch upon the single one which really decided him.

Berti still hoped to obtain perhaps through Egmont's eloquence, what he despaired of effecting by his own. He proposed a meeting with the latter (1567) to which the Prince lent himself the more willingly, as he himself felt a desire to embrace his friend Egmont once more before his departure, and if possible to snatch the deluded man from his certain destruction. This remarkable meeting, the last which was held between the two friends, took place in Villebroeck, a village on the Rupel, between Brussels and Antwerp; with the private Secretary Berti, the young Count of Mansfeld also was present at it. The Calvinists whose last hope rested on the issue of this conference, had found means to learn its import through a spy, who concealed himself in the chimney of the apartment where it was held. All three here attacked

the resolve of the Prince with their united eloquence, but without being able to shake him. "It will cost you your estates, Orange, if you persist in this intention," said to him the Prince of Gaure, while he took him aside to a window. "And thee thy life, Egmont, if thou alterest not thine," replied the former. "To me it will at least be a consolation in my fate that I have desired to aid my country and my friends in the hour of need, with word and deed; thou wilt drag with thee friends and country into destruction." And he now, once again, exhorted him, still more urgently, than he had ever done, to restore himself to a nation, which his arm alone was yet able to preserve; if not, at least for his own sake to avoid the tempest which was advancing against him from Spain,

But all the reasons however lucid, with which a far-discerning prudence supplied him, brought forward with all the animation, with all the fire, which the tender anxiety of friendship alone could inspire, did not suffice, to destroy the fatal confidence which still fettered Egmont's better reason. The warning of Orange came from a sad and dispirited heart, and for Egmont the world still smiled. To quit the lap of abundance, of affluence and pomp in which he had grown up to youth and manhood; to part from all the thousand conveniences of life, which alone made it valuable to him, and all this to escape an evil, which his buoyant courage considered as

being still so far remote — no, that was not a sacrifice, which could be asked from Egmont. But had he been less given to indulgence than he was, with what heart could he have made a princess, pampered by long prosperity, a spouse who loved him, the children on whom his soul hung, acquainted with deprivations, at which his own courage sank, which an exalted philosophy alone can persuade sensuality to undergo. “Thou wilt never persuade me, Orange,” said Egmont, “to see things in the gloomy light in which they appear to thy mournful prudence. When I have succeeded in abolishing the public preachings, and chastising the Iconoclasts, in crushing the rebels and restoring their former peace to the Provinces, what can the king lay to my charge? The king is good and just, I have earned claims upon his gratitude, and I must not forget what I owe to myself,” — “Well then,” cried Orange indignantly and with internal anguish, “trust in this royal gratitude! but a mournful presentiment tells me, and may Heaven grant that I am deceived! — that thou wilt be the bridge, Egmont, by which the Spaniards will pass into the country, and which they will destroy when they have passed it.” He drew him, after saying this, with fervour to himself and clasped him ardently and fervently in his arms. Long, as though for the remainder of his life, he kept his eyes fastened upon him; he shed tears — they saw one another no more.

Immediately with the following day, Orange

wrote his letter of resignation to the Regent, in which he assured her of his perpetual esteem, and once again entreated her to give the best interpretation to his present letter; he then departed with his three brothers and his whole family to his town of Breda, where he remained only so long as was requisite, to put in order some further private business. His eldest son, Prince Philip William alone, remained behind at the University of Louvaine, because he thought him sufficiently secure under the protection of the privileges of Brabant, and the immunities of the Academy; an improvidence, which if it was really not designed, can hardly be reconciled with the just opinion which he had in so many other cases formed regarding the character of his adversary. In Breda the heads of the Calvinists once more applied to him with the question whether there was still hope for them, or whether all was irretrievably lost? «He had before advised them,» replied the Prince, «and now came back again to the same point, that they ought to accede to the Confession of Augsburg; then they would be sure of aid from Germany. If they would still not consent to this, they must raise for him 600,000 florins, or more, if they could. — «The first,» they answered, was at variance with their conviction and their conscience; but means might perhaps be found to raise the money, if he would only let them know, for what purpose he would use it, «Yes,» cried he, with

displeasure, "if I must tell you that, it is all over with the use of it." He at the same time broke off the conference, and soon afterwards dismissed the deputies. He was reproached, with having squandered his fortune, and favoring the innovations on account of his debts; but he asserted, that he still enjoyed 60,000 florins yearly rental. He caused, before his departure 20,000 florins more to be lent him by the States of Holland for which he mortgaged some manors to them. Men could not persuade themselves that he would succumb to necessity so entirely without resistance, and give up all further attempts, but what he secretly meditated no one knew, no one had read in his heart. Some persons asked him, how he intended to conduct himself towards the king of Spain for the future. "Quietly," was his answer, "unless he assails my honor or my estates." He left the Netherlands soon afterwards, in order to betake himself to retirement in the town of Dillenburg in Nassau where he was born; many hundreds as well of his servants as volunteers accompanied him to Germany; he was soon followed by the Counts of Hoogstraten, of Kuilemburg, of Bergen, who preferred sharing a voluntary exile with him to recklessly meeting an uncertain destiny. The nation saw in him its guardian angel fly; many had adored, all had honored him. With him sank the last stay of the Protestants; they, however, hoped more from this man in exile, than from all the others toge-

her who remained behind. Even the Catholics could not without pain see him retire. For them, too, he had opposed tyranny; he had not unfrequently protected them against their own church, he had saved many of them from the sanguinary jealousy of the dissenters. A few poor souls among the Calvinists, who were offended with his proposal of an alliance with their brethren, who avowed the Confession of Augsburg, solemnized with secret thanksgivings the day on which the enemy had left them. (1567).



DECAY AND DISPERSION OF THE GEUSEN LEAGUE.

Immediately after taking leave of his friend, the Prince of Gaure hastened back to Brussels, to receive at the Court of the Regent the reward of his firmness, and there in the bustle of the Court and in the sunshine of his good fortune, to dispel the few clouds which Orange's earnest warning had brought over his mind. The flight of the latter left him now alone in possession of the stage. He had now no longer any rival in the Republic, to dim his glory. With redoubled zeal he now continued to woo a transitory Court favour, above which, he ought to have felt himself so far exalted. All Brussels must participate in his joy. He gave splendid banquets and public feasts, which the Regent herself frequently attended, in order to eradicate all trace of suspicion from his mind. Not contented with having taken the required oath, he, outstripped the most devout in devotion; in zeal, outdid the most zealous, in extirpating the

Protestant faith and in subjecting by force of arms the refractory towns of Flanders. He declared to the Count of Hoogstraten, his old friend, as also to all the rest of the Geusen, that he would withdraw his friendship from them for ever, if they hesitated any longer to return into the bosom of the church and reconcile themselves with their king. All the confidential correspondence, of which both parties were in possession, was returned, and the breach between the two, made, through this last step, public and irremediable. Egmont's secession and the flight of the Prince of Orange destroyed the last hope of the Protestants and dissolved the whole League of the Geusen. Each pressed before the other in readiness, in impatience to abjure the Covenant and to take the new oath which was proposed to them. In vain the Protestant merchants exclaimed at this breach of faith of the nobles; their weak voice was heard no longer and all the sums were lost which they had supplied for the purpose of the League.

The most important places were reduced and garrisoned; the rebels fled, or perished by the hand of the executioner; in the Provinces no protector was left. All yielded to the fortune of the Regent and her victorious army was advancing against Antwerp. After a long and obstinate contest this town had been cleared of the worst rebels; Hermann and his adherents fled; the internal storms had spent their rage.

The minds of the people began gradually to be composed, and, no longer excited by any furious fanatic, to admit of better counsels. The wealthy citizens longed earnestly for peace, in order that they might see commerce and trade revive, which had suffered heavily from the long anarchy. Alba's dreaded approach worked wonders; in order to anticipate the oppression, which a Spanish army would inflict upon the country, they hastened to throw themselves into the mild hands of the Dutchess. Of their own accord they despatched Plenipotentiaries to Brussels, to propose to her a treaty and to hear her terms. Agreeably as the Regent was surprised by this voluntary step, she allowed herself the less to be hurried away by her joy. She declared that she neither could nor would listen to any thing, until the town had received a garrison. Even this no longer met with opposition, and the Count of Mansfeld marched in, the day after, with sixteen squadrons in battle array. A solemn treaty was now made between the town and the Dutchess, by which the former bound itself to abolish entirely the Calvinistic form of worship, to banish all preachers of that church, to restore the Roman Catholic religion in its former dignity, to decorate again the despoiled churches with all their former ornaments, to administer as before the old Edicts, to take in like manner the new oath, to which the other town had sworn, and to deliver into the hands

of justice all who had been guilty of treason, borne arms, or taken part in the desecration of the churches. On the other hand the Regent pledged herself, to forget all that had passed, and even to intercede for the offenders with the king. All those, who being dubious of pardon preferred banishment, should have a month granted them to convert their property into cash and place themselves in safety; but with exclusion of those who had been guilty of any capital offence, and who were understood to be excepted by the previous article. Immediately after conclusion of this treaty, all Calvinist and Lutheran preachers in Antwerp, and the whole territory adjoining, were warned through the herald to quit the country within 24 hours. All the streets and gates were now thronged with fugitives, who for the honor of their God abandoned what was dearest to them, and sought a more propitious clime for their persecuted faith. In one place husbands were taking an eternal farewell of their wives, fathers of their children; in another they were carrying them away with them from their homes. All Antwerp resembled a house of mourning; wherever the eye was directed an affecting spectacle of the most painful separation presented itself. All the Protestant churches were sealed, the whole religion was extinct. The 10th of April (1567) was the day on which the preachers quitted the place. When they shewed themselves once more in the townhall, in order

to take leave of the Magistrate, they could refrain from tears no longer, and broke forth into the bitterest lamentations. They had been sacrificed, they exclaimed, they had been shamefully deserted. But a time would come when Antwerp would pay dearly enough for this baseness. The most bitter complaints were made by the Lutheran clergy, whom the Magistrate himself had invited into the country, to preach against the Calvinists. Under the false delusion that the king was not unfavourable to their religion, they had been involved in a combination against the Calvinists, and the latter had been subjected through their co-operation; now that they were no longer required, both were left to bewail their folly in a common destiny.

A few days afterwards the Regent entered Anwerp in triumph, accompanied by a thousand Walloon horse, by all the knights of the Golden Fleece, all the Governors and Counsellors, by her whole Court and a great number of municipal officers, with all the pomp of a Conqueror. Her first visit was to the Cathedral, which still every where bore lamentable traces of the violence of the Iconoclasts, and cost her devotion the most bitter tears. Immediately afterwards four of the rebels, who had been brought back from flight, were executed in the public market place. All the children who had been baptised after the Protestant fashion were obliged to be rebaptized by Catholic priests; all the schools of

less credit on the letters of the king, which contained the explanation of his proceedings, than on the reports of a few worthless persons who had left a memorial of their acts in so many demolished churches. They had better leave to the King of Spain the care of his subject's welfare, and renounce the inglorious task of fostering the spirit of rebellion in foreign countries." The Ambassadors left Antwerp again in a few days without having effected any thing; the Minister from Saxony alone, stated to the Regent in private, that his Sovereign had taken this step from compulsion, and was sincerely devoted to the house of Austria. The German ambassadors had not yet quitted Antwerp when intelligence from Holland completed the triumph of the Regent.

The Count of Brederode had deserted his town of Viane, and all his new fortifications, from fear of the Count of Megen, and with the aid of the Non-catholics had thrown himself into Amsterdam, where his presence caused great alarm to the Magistrate, who had previously with difficulty succeeded in quelling an insurrection within the city; but revived afresh the courage of the Protestants. Here Brederode's adherents increased daily and many noblemen flocked to him from Utrecht, Friesland and Gröningen, whom the victorious arms of Megen and Aremberg had driven from thence. Under various disguises they found means to steal into the city, where

they assembled about the person of their leader and served him as a strong bodyguard. The Regent, afraid of a new outbreak, sent one of her private Secretaries, Jacob de la Torre, to the Council of Amsterdam, and ordered them, to get rid of Count Brederode, in whatever way they could. Neither the Magistrate nor de la Torre himself, who acquainted him in person with the will of the Dutchess, prevailed in accomplishing anything with him, and the latter was even surprised by some of the noblemen, who were followers of Brederode, in his own chamber, and had all his papers taken from him. Perhaps he would even have lost his life, if he had not found means, to make a hurried escape out of their hands. Brederode hung on in Amsterdam another full month after this occurrence, a powerless idol of the Protestants and a burthen to the Catholics, without doing more, than running up his score, while his fine army, which he had left in Viane, reinforced by many fugitives from the Southern Provinces, gave the Count of Megen enough to do, so as to prevent him from harassing the Protestants in their flight. At last Brederode resolved, after the example of Orange, to yield to necessity, and to give up a cause which was no longer defensible. He disclosed to the Town Council his wish to leave Amsterdam, if they were willing to put him in a position to do so by lending him a moderate sum. In order to get quit of him,

they hastened to procure this money, and some bankers advanced it on the security of the Town Council. He then quitted Amsterdam the same night, and was conveyed in a boat armed with guns as far as Vlie, from whence he fortunately escaped to Emden. Fate treated him more mildly than the majority of those he had implicated in his foolhardy enterprise; he died the year after, 1568, at one of his Castles in Germany from the consequences of excessive drinking, into which habit he had at last fallen to dispel his grief. A more happy lot fell to his widow, born Countess of Moers, who was espoused by Frederick the 3rd Electoral Prince of the Palatinate. The protestant cause lost but little by Brederode's demise; the work which he had commenced did not die with him, as it had not been kept alive by him.

The little army, which by his disgraceful flight he had left to itself, was courageous and valiant and had a few resolute leaders. It was disbanded, as soon as he, who had to pay it, fled; but its good courage and hunger kept it together for some time longer. A part of it marched under the command of Dietrich of Battenburg to before Amsterdam, in the hope of carrying that town; but the Count of Megen, who with thirteen companies of excellent troops hastened to relieve the place compelled the rebels to give up this attempt. They contented themselves with plundering the neighbouring cloisters, on which

occasion the abbey of Egmont in particular was hardly dealt with; and they then broke off towards Waaterland, where, on account of the numerous swamps, they believed they should be safe from further pursuit. But thither too, the Count of Megen followed them and compelled them to seek their preservation in all haste at the Zuydersee. The brothers of Battenburg with two noblemen of Friesland, Beima and Galama, with a hundred and twenty soldiers and the booty they had taken from the cloisters, embarked near the town of Hoorne on board a vessel, in order to cross over to Friesland, but through the treachery of the steersman, who ran the vessel on a sandbank near Harlingen, fell into the hands of an Aremberg captain, who took them all prisoners. The Count of Aremberg immediately pronounced sentence upon those among the captives who where of the lower orders; but he sent the noblemen who were found among them to the Regent, who caused seven of them to be beheaded. Seven others of the most noble blood, among whom were the brothers of Battenburg and some Frieslanders, all in the bloom of youth, were kept for the Duke of Alba, in order to enable him to signalise the commencement of his administration by a deed, which was worthy of him. Four other vessels which set sail from Medemblick, and were pursued by the Count of Megen in small boats, were more successful. A contrary wind had forced them out of their course, and driven them ashore on

the coast of Gueldres, where they all got safe to land; they crossed the Rhine near Heusen and fortunately escaped into Cleves, where they tore their flags in pieces, and dispersed. The Count of Megen overtook in North Holland some squadrons, who had lingered too long in plundering the cloisters, completely overpowered them, and afterwards formed a junction with Noircarmes and garrisoned Amsterdam. The Duke Erich of Brunswick surprised three companies of soldiers, the last remains of the army of the Geusen near Viane, where they were endeavouring to take a battery, routed them and took prisoner their leader Renesse, who was shortly afterwards beheaded at the castle. Freudenburg in Utrecht. Subsequently, when Duke Erich entered Viane, he found nothing but deserted streets, and a town void of inhabitants; who with the garrison had left it on the first alarm. He immediately caused the fortifications to be razed, the ramparts and gates demolished, and reduced this arsenal of the Geusen to an open town without defences. The first originators of the League had dispersed; Brederode and Louis of Nassau had fled to Germany, and the Counts of Hoogstraten, Bergen and Kuilemburg had followed their example, Mansfeld had seceded; the brothers of Battenburg awaited in prison an ignominious fate, and Thoulouse had found an honorable death on the battle field. Those of the Confederates who had escaped the sword of the enemy and of the executioner, had

saved nothing but their lives, and thus they at last saw the name which they had assumed for show, fulfilled as regarded themselves with terrible reality.

(1567). Such was the inglorious end of this praiseworthy League, which in the first period of its existence awakened such fair hopes of itself, and had the appearance of becoming a powerful protection against oppression. Unanimity was its strength; distrust and internal dissention its ruin. It brought to light and developed many rare and beautiful virtues; but it wanted the two most indispensable of all, moderation and prudence, without which all undertakings miscarry, all the fruits of the most laborious industry perish. If its objects had been as pure, as it gave out, or even had they remained as pure, as they really were at its first establishment, it might have defied the fortuitous circumstances which prematurely undermined it, and even if unsuccessful, it would have deserved a glorious commemoration in history. But it is but too apparent, that the confederate nobles had directly or indirectly taken a share in the frantic acts of the Iconoclasts, greater than comported with the dignity and blamelessness of that for which they were confederated, and many among them had evidently exchanged their own good cause for the mad enterprise of these worthless vagabonds. The restriction of the Inquisition and a somewhat more humane form of the Edicts was one of

the beneficial effects of the League; but the death of so many thousands, who perished in the undertaking, the denuding of the country of so many excellent citizens, who carried their industry into another quarter of the globe, the calling in of the Duke of Alba and the return of Spanish arms into the Provinces was surely all too dear a price for this transient relief. Many good and peaceable persons who, without this dangerous opportunity, would never have known temptation, were excited by the name of the League to culpable enterprises and inspired with hopes of a successful termination and by the failure of these hopes plunged into destruction. But it cannot be denied, that it atoned for much that it had injured, by positive utility. By this League individuals were brought closer to one another and were drawn from a pusillanimous selfishness; by it a salutary public spirit was re-diffused amongst the Netherlandish people, which hitherto, under the oppression of the monarchical government, had been almost entirely extinguished, and through its means an unanimity was introduced amongst the scattered members of the nation, the difficulty of which is the sole thing so emboldens Despots. The attempt, indeed, failed, and the knots too carelessly tied were again unloosed; but in these failures the nation at last learned to find the enduring bond, which was to bid defiance to change.

The total destruction of the Geusen army now

brought the towns of Holland, too, back to their former obedience, and in the Provinces there was no longer a single place, which had not submitted to the arms of the Regent; but the increasing emigration of natives and foreign residents threatened the country with a ruinous depopulation. In Amsterdam the crowd of fugitives was so great that vessels were wanting to convey them across the north and Zuydersee, and that flourishing emporium beheld with dismay the approaching downfall of its prosperity. Alarmed by this universal flight, the Regent hastened to write letters of encouragement to all the towns, and to support the sinking courage of the citizens by fair promises. She promised in the royal name to all, who would freely swear to obey the king and the church, full indemnity, and invited the fugitives by public letters to return in dependence upon the royal clemency. She engaged to the nation to free it from the Spanish army, even if it were already on the frontiers; nay, she went so far as to drop hints, that means might easily be found to prevent, by force, that army from entering the Provinces, as she was fully determined, not to relinquish to another, the glory of a peace, which she had effected with so much labour. But few returned in reliance upon her plighted word, and these few had cause to repent it in the sequel; many thousands had already quitted the country and several thousands more followed them. Germany and

England were filled with Netherlandish emigrants, who, wherever they settled, retained their usages and manners even to their costume, because it was too painful to them to give up entirely their native land, and to part from the hope itself of a return. Few brought with them any remains of their former affluence; by far the greater portion begged their way, and bestowed on their new country nothing but their iudustrious skill, useful hands, and honest citizens.

And now the Regent hastened to report to the king tidings, with which during her whole administration she had never yet been able to gratify him. She announced to him, that she had succeeded, in restoring quiet to all the Provinces of the Netherlands, and that she thought herself strong enough to maintain it. The Sects were extirpated, and the Roman-Catholic worship shone with its former splendour; the rebels had met the punishment of their deserts, or still awaited it in prison; the towns were secured by adequate garrisons. There was now therefore, no longer a necessity for any Spanish troops in the Netherlands, and nothing left, which could justify their entrance. Their arrival would again destroy the order and repose, which it had cost so much coutrivance to establish, would retard commerce and traffic, both of which were so much required, and while it would plunge the citizens into expenses, would at the same time rob them of the only means of supporting the

same. The mere rumour of the approach of a Spanish army had stipped the country of many thousand useful citizens; its actual appearance would reduce it to a perfect desert. As there was no longer any enemy to subdue, or rebellion to suppress, no other motive for this army could be discovered but that it was marching in to inflict punishment; but under this supposition it would have no very honorable entry. Being no longer excused by necessity, this violent expedient, would have only the detested semblance of oppression, would exasperate the national mind afresh, drive the Protestants to desperation and arm their brethren in other countries in their defence. She had promised the nation in the king's name that she would free it from this foreign army, and to this stipulation she was principally indebted for the present peace, she would therefore not guarantee its continuance if he falsified her word. The Netherlands would receive him, himself, their Sovereign the king, with all the marks of attachment and veneration; but he must come as a father not as a monarch to chastise them. He should come to enjoy the peace which she had bestowed on the country, but not to desroy it afresh.

ALBA'S ARMAMENT AND EXPEDITION TO THE NETHERLANDS.

But it was otherwise determined in the Council at Madrid. The Minister Granvella, who through his adherents ruled the Spanish Cabinet even while absent; the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor, Spinosa, and the Duke of Alba, each swayed by his hatred, his spirit of persecution, or his private interest, had outvoted, the milder counsels of the Prince Ruy Gomes of Eboli, the Count of Feria, and the King's Confessor, Fresneda. The insurrection, they argued, was for the present indeed quelled, but only because the rebels were awed by the rumour of the King's armed approach; it was to fear alone, not to penitence that the present calm was to be attributed, and it would soon be interrupted if that feeling could be shaken off. As the offences of the Netherlandish people afforded the King an opportunity so fair, and which he had so long desired, for carrying out his despotic views with an appearance of justice, the peacable settlement for which the

Regent assumed merit, was very far from being his own particular aim, which was no other than under a legitimate pretext to deprive the Provinces of their privileges, which had long been obnoxious to his imperious spirit.

Hitherto he had with the most impenetrable dissimulation supported the general delusion that he would visit the Provinces in person, remote as this perhaps all along was from being his real intention. Travelling altogether ill agreed with the clockwork regularity of his methodical life, and with the narrowness and slow procedure of his mind, which the variety and novelty of the scenes, which then crowded on him easily disturbed, and oppressed. The difficulties and dangers with which the journey to the Netherlands in particular was attended, must therefore have so much the more alarmed his natural timidity and self indulgence, the less he, who was accustomed to consider himself alone in what he did, and to accommodate men to his principles, not his principles to men, could see the advantage of such an expedition or the necessity for it. Moreover as it was to him an impossibility to separate his person even for a moment from his royal dignity, which no prince in the world guarded so tenaciously and pedantically as himself, so the embarrassments, which were insurmountably connected in his mind with such a journey, and the expenses to which it would on this account necessarily give rise, were of themselves sufficient

motives for his shrinking from it, without its being at all requisite to call in the aid of the influence of his favourite Ruy Gomes, who is said to have been desirous of removing his rival, the Duke of Alba, from the person of the King. But little as he seriously intended this journey he still found it necessary, to allow the dread of it to operate, in order to prevent a dangerous combination of the disaffected, sustain the courage of the loyal, and stop the further progress of the rebels.

In order to carry the deceit, as far as possible, Philip had made the most extensive preparations for his departure, and had not neglected anything, which could at all be requisite in case of such an event. He had ordered ships to be prepared, had appointed officers and fixed on all who were to attend him. That suspicion might not be excited by these warlike preparations, all foreign Courts were informed through his Ambassadors of his design. He applied to the King of France for a free passage for himself and his attendants through that kingdom, and took advice of the Duke of Savoy as to which of the two routes was preferable. He caused a schedule to be drawn up of all the towns and fortified places, through which his way might under any circumstances lead him, and directed their respective distances to be laid down with the greatest accuracy. An order was issued that the whole extent of country between Savoy

and Burgundy should be surveyed and a special map of it drawn up, for which purpose the Duke was requested to furnish the requisite surveyors and scientific officers. To such a length was the imposition carried that the Regent was commanded, to hold at least eight vessels in readiness off Zealand, which she was to despatch to meet the King, the instant she heard of his having sailed from Spain. And these vessels she actually prepared and caused prayers to be offered up in all the churches for the King's safety during the voyage, though many persons secretly remarked that, in his chamber at Madrid his Majesty would not have much cause to dread storms at sea Philip played his part in such a masterly manner, that the Netherlandish Ambassadors in Madrid, the lords of Bergen and Montigny, who had hitherto taken all for a mere pretence, at last themselves began to be alarmed at it, and infected their friends in Brussels too with the like fears. A tertian fever which about this time attacked the King in Segovia, or which he feigned, afforded him a plausible pretence for postponing his journey, while, meantime, the preparations for it were carried on with the utmost activity. Finally when the urgent and repeated solicitations of his sister compelled him to a definite statement, he settled that the Duke of Alba should precede him with an army, to clear the way of rebels and enhance the splendour of his own royal arrival. He did not yet venture to

announce the Duke as his substitute, because it was not to be hoped that the submissive behaviour, which the nobility of the Netherlands could not refuse to their Sovereign, would be extended to one of his servants, whose cruel character was known to the whole nation, and who was detested by them as a foreigner and the enemy of their constitution. And in fact the universal belief that the King was soon to follow, which continued long after Alba's actual entrance into the country, restrained disturbances from breaking out which would otherwise assuredly have been caused by the cruelty with which the Duke opened his Regency.

The clergy of Spain and especially the Inquisition contributed richly towards this Netherlandish expedition, as to a holy war. Enlisting was carried on throughout Spain with the utmost zeal. The Viceroy and Governors of Sardinia, Sicily, Naples and Milan, received orders to assemble the elite of their Italian and Spanish troops in garrison, and depatch them to the general rendezvous in the Genoese territory, where the Duke of Alba would receive them, and give in exchange for them Spanish recruits, which he would bring with him. At the same time the Regent was commanded, to hold in readiness a few more regiments of German infantry in Luxembourg, under the command of the Counts Eberstein, Schaumburg and Lodrona, and also some squadrons of light cavalry in the County of Bur-

gundy, in order that the Spanish general might reinforce himself with them immediately on entering the Provinces. The Count of Barlaimont was commissioned to furnish provisions to the army which was to enter the Netherlands, and a sum of 200,000 gold florins was paid over to the Regent in order to defray these new expenses, as well as the cost of her troops.

Meanwhile as the French Court, under pretence of apprehending danger from the Huguenots, had refused to allow the whole Spanish army to pass through France, Philip applied to the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, who were too dependent upon him to refuse his request. The first merely stipulated that he should be allowed to maintain 2000 infantry and a squadron of horse at the King's expense, in order to protect his country from the injuries to which it might be exposed during the passage of the Spanish army. At the same time he undertook to provide the necessary supplies for the army himself.

The report of this passage roused the Huguenots, the Genevese, the Swiss and the Grisons. The Prince of Condé, and the Admiral Coligny, entreated Charles the 9th not to neglect so favourable a moment, when it lay in his power, to deal a deadly blow to the hereditary foe of France. With the aid of the Swiss, the Genevese, and his own Protestant subjects it would, they alleged, be an easy matter for him to destroy the flower of the Spanish troops in the narrow

passes of the Alpine mountains, and they promised to support him in this undertaking with an army of 50,000 Huguenots. This request however, whose dangerous object was not to be mistaken, was declined by Charles the 9th under a plausible pretext, and he took upon himself the task of providing for the security of his kingdom. He hastily despatched troops to cover the French frontiers; and the Republics of Geneva, Bern, Zurich and the Grisons followed his example, all ready to receive with the most determined opposition, the dreaded enemy of their religion and their liberty.

On the 5th of May 1567, the Duke of Alba set sail from Carthagera with thirty galleys which Andrew Doria and the Duke Cosmo of Florence had prepared for him, and landed within eight days at Genoa, where he received the four regiments, which were there in readiness. But a tertian fever, with which he was seized shortly after his arrival, compelled him to lie for some days inactive in Lombardy — a delay of which the neighbouring powers availed themselves to prepare for defence. As soon as the Duke found himself recovered he held, at the town of Asti in Montferrat, a review of all his troops, who were more formidable by their valour than by their numbers, and amounted, cavalry and infantry, to not much above 10,000 men. In his long and perilous march he wished not to encumber himself with useless baggage, which only impeded

his progress and increased the difficulty of supporting his army; these 10,000 veterans were to be, as it were, only the nucleus of a greater army, which according to circumstances and occasion he could easily assemble in the Netherlands themselves.

This army however was as select as it was small. It consisted of the remains of those victorious legions, at the head of whom Charles the 5th had made Europe tremble; sanguinary, indomitable bands in whom the old Macedonian phalanx was again resuscitated; rapid in their movements through the skill they had acquired by long practice, hardened against all elements, proud of their leader's success, emboldened by long experience of victory, formidable through their licentiousness but more formidable still through their discipline, let loose with all the passions of a warmer climate upon a peaceful and abundant country, and inexorable towards an enemy whom the church had cursed. Their fanatical and sanguinary spirit, their thirst for glory and innate courage was aided by a rough sensuality, the strongest and surest means by which the Spanish general guided these rude bands. With provident indulgence he allowed riot and voluptuousness to spread through the army. Under his tacit protection Italian courtezans followed the standards; even in the march across the Appenines, where the expensiveness of the necessaries of life compelled him to reduce his force to the smallest possible number, he preferred having a few re-

giments less to leaving behind these instruments of voluptuousness. *)

But industriously as Alba strove to relax the morals of his soldiers, he coerced them on the other hand much more by the most rigid discipline, which was interrupted only by a victory or rendered less severe by a battle. In this he put in practice the saying of the Athenian General Iphicrates, who awarded the prize of valour to the pleasure-loving and rapacious soldier. The more irksome the restraint by which the passions of the soldiers were kept down, the more furiously must they have broken forth through the sole outlet which was left open to them.

The Duke divided his whole infantry, which was about nine thousand strong, and chiefly Spaniards, into four brigades to the command of which he appointed four Spanish officers. Alphonso of Ulloa led the Neapolitan brigade, which amounted to 3230 men, in nine companies; Sancho of Lodogno commanded the Milan brigade, 3200 men in ten companies; the Sicilian brigade with the same number of companies, and consisting of

*) The bacchanalian procession of this army contrasted strangely enough with the gloomy seriousness and pretended sanctity of its aim. The number of these public women was so excessively great that, compelled by necessity, they hit upon the idea of introducing among themselves a discipline of their own. They ranged themselves under particular flags, marched in ranks and sections, and in admirable military order after each battalion, and classed themselves with strict etiquette according to their rank and pay.

1600 men, was commanded by Julian Romero, an experienced warrior, who had already fought on Netherlandish ground,*) and Gonsalo of Braccamonte led the Sardinian, which was completed to the strength of the former brigade by three companies of recruits, who had lately joined. To every company moreover were added fifteen Spanish musqueteers. The horse, not above 1200 strong, consisted of three Italian, two Albanian, and seven Spanish squadrons light and heavy cavalry, and the chief command over it was held by the two sons of the Duke, Ferdinand and Frederick of Toledo. Chiappin Vitelli, Marquis of Cetona was field Marshal; a celebrated officer whose services had been made over to the King of Spain by Cosmo of Florence; and Gabriel Serbellon was General of Artillery. The Duke of Savoy lent Alba an experienced Engineer, Francis Pacotto, from Urbino, who could be useful to him in the Netherlands in the erection of new fortifications. His banners were likewise followed by a great number of volunteers, and the flower of the Spanish nobility, of whom the greater part had fought under Charles the 5th in Germany, Italy, and before Tunis; as for example Christopher Mondragone one of the ten Spanish heroes, who near Mühlberg swam across the Elbe with their

*) The same officer, who commanded one of the Spanish regiments, about which so much complaint had formerly been made in the States-General.

swords between their teeth, and under a shower of bullets from the enemy, brought over from the opposite shore, the boats with which the Emperor constructed subsequently a bridge; Sancho of Avila, who had been trained to war by Alba himself, Camillo of Monte, Francis Ferdugo, Karl Davila, Nicolaus Basta and Count Martinego, all fired with noble zeal, to open their military career under so eminent a leader, or by this glorious campaign to crown the fame they had already won. After the review had been held the army marched in three divisions across Mount Cenis, by the same route which sixteen centuries before Hannibal is said to have taken. The Duke himself led the van; Ferdinand of Toledo, with whom was associated Lodogno as Colonel, the centre, and the Marquis of Cetona the rear. The Commissary General Francis of Ibarra was sent before with General Serbellon, to make the road for the army and get ready the supplies at the encampment for the day. The place which the van left in the morning was entered in the evening by the centre, which in its turn on the following day made room for the rear. Thus the army crossed the Alps of Savoy by regular stages, and with the fourteenth day completed that dangerous passage. A French army of observation accompanied it side by side along the frontiers of Dauphiné and the course of the Rhone, and the allied army of the Genevese followed it on the

right and was passed by it at a distance of seven miles; both these armies of observation forbore from any act of hostility, and were merely intended to cover their own frontiers. As the Spanish legions ascended and descended the steep mountain crags, or while they crossed the rapid Iser, or file by file wound through the narrow passes of the rocks, a handful of men would have been sufficient to have put an entire stop to their march, and driven them back into the mountains, where they would have been lost without any possibility of escaping, because at each encamping place supplies were provided only for a single day, and for a third portion of the army. But a supernatural awe and dread of the Spanish name appeared to have closed the eyes of the enemy, that they did not perceive their advantage, or at least did not venture to avail themselves of it. In order not to remind them of it, the Spanish General hastened with all possible secrecy to steal through this dangerous pass convinced that if he gave umbrage he was lost; during the whole march the strictest discipline was observed, not a single peasant's hut, not a single field was injured;*) and never per-

*) Once only on entering Lorraine, three horsemen ventured to drive away a few sheep from a flock, of which circumstance the Duke was no sooner informed, than he sent back to the owner what had been taken from him and sentenced the offenders to be hung. This sentence was, at the intercession of the Lorraine General, who had come to the frontiers to pay his respects to the Duke executed on only one of the three, upon whom the lot fell at the drumhead.

haps, in the memory of man, was so numerous an army led so far in such excellent order. A terrible and fatal star conducted this army, destined as it was for murder, safe through all dangers, and it would be difficult to decide, whether the prudence of its general; or the blindness of his enemies is most to be wondered at.

In Franche Compté four newly raised squadrons of Burgundian cavalry joined the main army, as also three regiments of German infantry at Luxembourg, under the command of the Counts of Eberstein, Schaumburg, and Lodrona. From Thionville, where he halted a few days, Alba sent his salutations to the Regent by Francis of Ibarra, who was at the same time directed to consult with her regarding the quartering of the troops. On her part Noircarmes and Barlaimont were despatched to the Spanish camp, to congratulate the Duke on his arrival and to shew him the customary marks of honor. At the same time they were directed to ask him to produce the powers entrusted to him by the King, which however he shewed only in part. These lords were followed by whole swarms of the Flemish nobility, who thought they could not hasten soon enough to win the favour of the new Viceroy, or by a timely submission conciliate the vengeance which was preparing against them. Among these, when the Count of Egmont came forward, the Duke pointed him out to the bystanders. "Here comes an arch-

heretic," he exclaimed, loud enough for Egmont to hear him, who surprised at these words stopped and changed colour. But when, in order to repair his imprudence, the Duke went up to him with a serene countenance and greeted him with a friendly embrace, the Fleming was ashamed of his fear, and made light of this warning by putting some frivolous interpretation upon it. Egmont sealed this new friendship with a present of two excellent horses, which were received with grave condescension.

Upon the assurance of the Regent that the Provinces were in the enjoyment of perfect peace, and that no opposition was to be apprehended from any quarter, the Duke allowed some German regiments, which had hitherto drawn pay for their detention, to be discharged. Three thousand six hundred men under the command of Lodrona were quartered in Antwerp, from which town the Walloon garrison, in which complete reliance was not placed, was withdrawn; a proportionably strong garrison was thrown into Ghent and other important places; Alba himself marched with the Milan brigade towards Brussels, whither a splendid cortege of the noblest in the land accompanied him.

Here, as in all the other towns of the Netherlands, fear and terror had preceded him, and whoever was conscious of any kind of guilt, and those even who were conscious of none awaited his approach with a dread like that inspired by

the day of judgment. Whoever could tear himself from family, property, and country, took to flight, or had already fled. The advance of the Spanish army had according to the Regent's own report diminished the population of the Provinces by the loss of 100,000 citizens, and this universal flight still continued without cessation. But the arrival of the Spanish General could not be more hateful to the people of the Netherlands, than it was distressing and dispiriting to the Regent. At last, after so many years of anxiety, she had begun to taste the sweets of repose, and that absolute authority which had been the long looked for object of her eight years' administration, and which had always hitherte remained an empty wish. This fruit of her anxious industry, of her care and night vigils, was now to be torn from her by a stranger, who was at once placed in possession of all the advantages, which she could win from circumstances only by tedious contrivance; and who was to lightly bear away from her the prize of celerity, and triumph by more rapid success over her solid but less glittering merits. Since the departure of the Minister Granvella, she had tasted the full gratification of independence; and the flattering homage of the nobility, which allowed her to enjoy the appearance of power, the more they deprived her of its substance, had by degrees fostered her vanity to such an extent, that she at last detached from her, by her coldness, even her

most upright servant, State Counsellor Viglius, who always addressed her in the language of truth. Now all at once a censor of her actions was placed at her side, a partner of her power was associated with her, if indeed it was not rather a master who was forced upon her, from whose proud, stubborn and imperious spirit, which no courtesy could soften, her self love was threatened with the deadliest wounds: To prevent his arrival she had vainly exhausted every political argument in her representations to the King, and urged that the utter ruin of the Commerce of the Netherlands would be the inevitable consequence of this introduction of the Spanish troops; she had in vain appealed to the peace, which was again restored to the country, and to her own services in procuring that peace, for which she deserved a better guerdon than the abandoning the fruits of her labours to a foreigner, and beholding the good, which she had effected, again destroyed by a line of conduct opposed to her own. Even when the Duke had already crossed Mount Cenis, she made one more attempt to prevail on him at least to diminish his army, and that also failed, like all that preceded it, for the Duke insisted upon acting up to the powers entrusted to him. With the most poignant grief she now awaited his approach, and mingled the tears of offended self love with those she shed for her country. The 22nd of August 1567, was the day on which the Duke of Alba

appeared before the gates of Brussels. His army immediately garrisoned the suburbs, and he himself made it his first duty to pay his respects to the sister of his King. She received him as though she was suffering from sickness, either because the mortification she had experienced, had in reality had such a serious effect upon her, or more probably because she chose this means to pain his haughty spirit and in some degree diminish his triumph. He delivered to her letters from the King, which he had brought for her from Spain, and laid before her a copy of his own appointment, wherein the supreme command over the whole military force of the Netherlands was committed to him, and from which, therefore, it appeared that the administration of civil affairs remained as heretofore with the Regent. But as soon as he found himself alone with her, he produced a new Commission which was totally different from the other. According to this the power was delegated to him, of making war as he might think good, of erecting fortifications, of appointing and dismissing at pleasure the Governors of provinces, the Commandants of towns and other officers of the King, of instituting inquiries into the past troubles, of punishing those who originated them and of rewarding the loyal. Powers of this extent, which placed him almost on a level with a Sovereign Prince, and far surpassed those, with which the Regent herself was provided, threw her into the

most extreme consternation, and it was with difficulty that she concealed her emotion. She asked the Duke whether he did not chance to have a third commission, or special orders in reserve, which went still further and were drawn up still more distinctly; to which he replied pretty clearly in the affirmative, but at the same time gave her to understand that this Commission might be too full to suit the present occasion, and would be better brought into play hereafter, with due regard to time and circumstances. A few days after his arrival he caused a copy of the first Instructions to be laid before the Councils and the States, and had them printed in order that they might be circulated the more rapidly. As the Regent resided in the palace, he took up his quarters temporarily in Kuilemburg house, the same in which the association of the Geusen had received its name, and before which, through a wonderful vicissitude, the Spanish tyranny now planted its flag.

A dead silence now reigned in Brussels, broken only at times by the unwonted clang of arms. The Duke had entered the town but a few hours, when his attendants like bloodhounds that have been slipped, dispersed themselves in all directions. Every where foreign faces were to be seen, deserted streets; all the houses were barred up, all amusements suspended, all public places deserted; the whole metropolis resembled a country over which the plague has passed.

Acquaintances now hurried by one another without as formerly stopping to converse; all hastened on the moment a Spaniard shewed himself in the streets. Every noise infused terror, as if an officer of justice was already knocking at the gates; the nobility kept to their houses in anxious expectation; they avoided appearing in public, lest they should bring themselves to the recollection of the new Viceroy. The two nations now seemed to have exchanged characters. The Spaniard had become the talkative man, and the Brabanter mute; distrust and fear had scared away the spirit of cheerfulness and mirth, a constrained gravity fettered even the play of the features. Every moment the descending blow was looked for with dread. Since the town had received the Spanish general within its walls, it resembled one who has drained a cup of poison, and with trembling anxiety each instant expects its deadly effect.

This general straining of expectancy warned the Duke to hasten to the accomplishment of his intentions, before he should be anticipated in them by the timely flight of his victims. His first object was to secure the suspected nobles, in order, at once and for ever, to deprive the faction of its leaders, and the nation, whose freedom was to be crushed, of its supports. By a pretended affability he had succeeded in lulling their first alarm, and in restoring the Count of Egmont in particular, to his former perfect

confidence, for which purpose he artfully employed his sons, Ferdinand and Frederick Toledo, whose companionableness and youth assimilated more easily with the Flemish character. Through this skilful management he succeeded also in enticing the Count of Hoorne to Brussels, who had hitherto thought it adviseable to watch the first advances from a distance, but now suffered himself to be seduced by the good fortune of his friend. Some of the nobility, at the head of whom was Count Egmont, even began to return to their former gay style of living, but still not with their whole hearts and without many imitators. Kuilemburg house was incessantly besieged by a numerous crowd of people, who thronged thither about the person of the new Viceroy, and exhibited an affected gaiety upon countenances wrung with distress and fear. Egmont in particular assumed the appearance of going in and out of the house with a light heart, entertained the Duke's sons, and was feted by them in return. Meanwhile the Duke reflected that so fair an opportunity for the accomplishment of his plans might not occur again, and that a single act of imprudence would be sufficient to destroy this feeling of security, through which both his victims had of their own accord surrendered themselves into his hands; but Hoogstraten also, as the third, was to be taken in the same net, whom he therefore, under a plausible pretext of business,

summoned to the metropolis. At the same time that he himself purposed securing the three Counts in Brussels, Colonel Lodrona was to arrest the Burgomaster Strahlen in Antwerp, an intimate friend of the Prince of Orange, and suspected of having favoured the Calvinists; another officer was to seize the Private Secretary of the Count of Egmont, whose name was John Casembrot von Beckerzeel, as also some Secretaries of the Count of Hoorne, and was to possess himself of their papers.

When the day came which was fixed upon for the execution of this plan, the Duke summoned all the State Counsellors and Knights before him, as if he wished to confer with them upon State matters; on which occasion were present on the part of the Netherlanders, the Duke of Arschot, the Counts of Mansfeld, Barlaimont and Aremberg, on the part of the Spaniards Vitelli, Serbellon and Ibarra besides the Duke's sons. The young Count of Mansfeld, who likewise appeared at this meeting, received a sign from his father to withdraw with all speed, and by a hasty flight avoid the destruction which was impending over him, as a former member of the Geusen League. The Duke purposely sought to prolong the consultation, in order that the couriers from Antwerp, who were to bring him the tidings of the arrest of the other persons, might first arrive. That suspicion might be the less excited, the Engineer Paciotto was made to


attend the debate, and lay before the Duke the plans for some fortifications. At last intelligence was brought that Lodrona's attempt had been carried through successfully, upon which the Duke broke off the debate in a well managed manner, and dismissed the Council. On this Count Egmont was just about to repair to the apartment of Don Ferdinand, in order to finish a game that he had commenced with him, when the Captain of the Duke's bodyguard, Sancho D'Avila, stopped him, and demanded his sword in the king's name. At the same time he saw himself surrounded by a number of Spanish soldiers, who, as had been preconcerted, suddenly advanced from their concealment. This utterly unexpected blow came upon Egmont with such a shock, that for some moments he lost the power of utterance and recollection; he soon however collected himself and took his sword from his side with dignified composure: «This sword», he said as he delivered it into the hands of the Spaniard, «has before this, on more than one occasion, defended the king's cause not unsuccessfully». At the same time another Spanish officer arrested the Count of Hoorne, who was just then returning to his house without any suspicion of danger. Hoorne's first inquiry was after Egmont. On being told that the same thing had that very instant happened to his friend, he surrendered himself without resistance. «I have suffered myself to be guided

by him," he exclaimed, «it is fair that I should share his fate with him.» Both Counts were placed in confinement, in separate apartments. While this was going on in the interior of Kuilemburg house, the whole garrison was drawn out and stood to arms before that building. No one knew what had taken place inside; a mysterious terror diffused itself throughout Brussels, until rumour spread the news of this fatal event. Every individual inhabitant felt as if he himself had been the sufferer; with many, indignation at Egmont's blind infatuation, preponderated over sympathy for his fate; all rejoiced that Orange had escaped. The first question of the Cardinal Granvella too, when these tidings were announced to him in Rome, is said to have been, whether they had taken the Silent One also? On being answered in the negative he shook his head: «then as they have let him escape they have got nothing». Fate ordained better for the Count of Hoogstraten, who was met by the report of this event on his way to Brussels, being compelled to travel slowly on account of sickness. He turned back in haste and fortunately escaped destruction. Immediately after Egmont's seizure a writing was extorted from him addressed to the Commandant of the Citadel of Ghent, in which he was obliged to order that officer to deliver over the fortress to the Spanish Colonel Alphonso d'Ulloa. The two Counts were then (after they had been for some weeks confined in Brussels apart from one another)

conveyed to Ghent, under a guard of 3000 Spanish soldiers, in which place they remained imprisoned till late in the following year. In the mean time all their papers had been seized. Many of the first nobility, who had suffered themselves to be cajoled into remaining, by the pretended kindness of the Duke of Alba, underwent the same fate; and capital punishment was now, without further delay, inflicted on those, who, before the Duke's arrival, had been made prisoners with arms in their hands. Upon the news of Egmont's arrest a second body of about 20,000 inhabitants took up the wanderer's staff, besides the 100,000, who had already placed themselves in safety and had not chosen to await the Spanish General's arrival. No one counted himself safe any longer, after so noble a life had been assailed *); but many found cause to

*) A great part of these fugitives helped to strengthen the army of the Huguenots, who had taken occasion, from the passage of the Spanish army through Lorraine, to assemble their forces, and now pressed Charles the 9th hard. On these grounds, the French Court thought it had a right to demand aid from the Regent of the Netherlands. It asserted that the Huguenots had looked upon the march of the Spanish army as the result of a preconcerted plan, which had been formed against them by the two Courts at Bayonne, and that this had roused them from their slumber. That consequently it behoved the Spanish Court to assist in extricating the French King from difficulties, into which the latter had been brought, simply by the march of the Spanish troops. Alba actually sent the Count of AreMBERG with a considerable force, to join the army of the Queen Mother in France, and even offered to command these subsidiaries in person, which however was declined. Strada 206. Thuan 541.

repent that they had deferred this salutary step so long; for every day flight was rendered more difficult, for the Duke ordered all the ports to be closed, and punished emigration with death. The beggars were now esteemed fortunate, who had abandoned country and property, in order to preserve their lives and liberty alone.



ALBA'S FIRST MEASURES AND DEPARTURE OF THE DUTCHESS OF PARMA.

Alba's first step, as soon as he had secured the most suspected of the nobles, was to restore the Inquisition to its former authority; to put the decrees of Trent again in force, abolish the "Moderation," and promulgate anew the Edicts against heretics in all their former severity. The Court of Inquisition in Spain, had declared the whole Netherlandish nation guilty of treason in the highest degree; Catholics and heterodox, loyalists and rebels, without distinction, the latter as having offended by overt acts, the former as having incurred equal guilt by their supineness, a very few excepted, the nominal specification of whom was held in reserve, and this sentence had been publicly confirmed by the King. At the same time he declared himself absolved from all his promises and released from all engagements, which the Regent in his name had entered into with the people of the Nether-

lands; and all justice which they had in future to expect from him depended on his own good will. All who had aided in the expulsion of the Minister Granvella, who had taken part in the petition of the Confederate Nobles, or had but even spoken in favour of it, all who had presented a petition against the decrees of Trent, against the Edicts relating to religion, or against the installation of the Bishops; all who had permitted the public preachings, or had only feebly resisted them; all who had worn the insignia of the Geusen, had sung Geusen songs, or had in any other way whatever manifested their joy at the establishment of the League; all who had sheltered or concealed non-catholic preachers, attended Calvinistic burials, or even only known of their secret meetings and not informed of them; all who had appealed to the privileges of the country; all in fine who had expressed an opinion that one ought to obey God rather than man — all these, indiscriminately, were obnoxious to the punishment, which the law imposed upon the violation of the royal prerogative and high treason, and this punishment should, according to the commands to be given, be executed on the guilty persons, without forbearance or favour without regard to rank, sex, or age, for an example to posterity, and for the terror of all future times. According to this declaration there was no longer an innocent person in the entire Netherlands, and the new Viceroy could make

a terrible selection amongst the whole nation. All property and life was his, and whoever, had the good fortune to preserve one or both, received them as the gift of his generosity and humanity. By this stroke of policy as refined as it was detestable, the nation was disarmed and unanimity rendered impossible. Since it depended entirely on the Duke's arbitrary will, upon whom the sentence should be executed, which had been passed upon all without exception, each individual kept himself quiet, in order to escape, if possible, the notice of the Viceroy, and avoid drawing the fatal lot upon himself; thus, each person of whom he was pleased to make an exception stood in a degree indebted to him, and was personally under an obligation to him which amounted to the worth of life and property. As however this penalty could at furthest be executed only on the lesser half of the nation, the Duke had naturally secured the greater moiety through the strongest ties of fear and gratitude, and for one, whom he sought out as a victim, he had gained ten others whom he passed over. And amid the streams of blood which he caused to flow, as long as he continued true to this policy, he remained in quiet possession of his rule, and did not forfeit this advantage, until the want of money compelled him to impose a burthen upon the nation, which oppressed all indiscriminately.

In order, however, to be more equal to this

bloody occupation, the details of which accumulated on his hands, and to be certain of not losing a single victim through the want of instruments; and on the other hand to render his proceedings independent of the States, with whose privileges they were so much at variance, and who, indeed, thought much too humanely for him, he instituted an extraordinary Court of Justice of twelve Criminal Judges, who were to try and pronounce sentence upon those implicated in the past disturbances, according to the directions given them to which they were to adhere to the letter. The mere introduction of this Court of Justice was a violation of the liberties of the country, which expressly stipulated, that no citizen should be tried beyond his own Province; but the Duke filled up the measure of his injustice, when, contrary to the most sacred privileges of the nation, he gave seats and votes in that Court to his Spaniards, the most declared enemies of Netherlandish liberty. He himself was the President of this Court, and after him a certain Licentiate Vargas, a Spaniard by birth, who had been cast out like a plague spot from his own country, where he had violated one of his wards; a shameless, hardened villain, in whose mind avarice, lust, and the thirst for blood, struggled for ascendancy, regarding whose worthlessness, in fine, the historians of both parties are unanimous. The principal members were the Count of Aremberg, Philip of Noircarmes, and Charles of Barlaimont, who

however never shewed themselves in it; Hadrian Nicolai Chancellor of Gueldres; Jacob Mertens, and Peter Asset, Presidents of Artois and Flanders; Jacob Hesselts, and John de la Porte, Counsellors of Ghent; Louis del Rio, Doctor of Theology and by birth a Spaniard; John du Bois, king's Advocate, and De la Torre, Secretary of the Court. Upon the representations of Viglius, the Privy Council was spared any part in this tribunal; nor was any one introduced into it from the great Council at Malines. The votes of the members were only recommendatory not conclusive, which latter power was reserved by the Duke to himself alone. No particular time was fixed for the sitting of the Court; the members assembled at noon as often as the Duke thought good. But after the expiration of the third month Alba began to be less frequent in his attendance, and at last resigned his place entirely to his favourite Vargas, who filled it with such odious fitness, that in a short time all the other members, weary of the atrocities of which they were compelled to be eyewitnesses and accomplices, remained away from the assembly, excepting, only, the Spanish Doctor Del Rio and the Secretary De la Torre.*) It revolts the feelings to read how the lives of the noblest and best were placed in

*) As in fact the Sentences passed upon the most eminent persons (for example the sentence of death passed upon Strahlen the Burgomaster of Antwerp) were signed only by Vargas, Del Rio and De la Torre.

the hands of Spanish vagabonds, and how nearly it happened, that even the sanctuaries of the nation, its Deeds and Charters were ransacked, the seals broken, and the most secret Contracts between the Sovereign and the State, profaned and exposed.*)

From the Council of Twelve, which from the object of its institution was called the Council for Disturbances, but which, on account of its proceedings, is more generally known under the appellation of the Blood Council, a name which the nation in their exasperation bestowed upon it, no revision of proceedings, no appeal was allowed. Its verdicts were irrevocable and independent of all other authority. No other tribunal in the country could take cognizance of cases, which related to the late insurrection, so that nearly all the other Courts of justice were at a stand. The Great Council at Malines was as good as abolished; the authority of the Council of State entirely ceased, insomuch that its sittings were discontinued. On

*) For an example of the unfeeling levity with which the most important matters, even decisions in cases of life and death, were treated in this sanguinary Council, it may serve to relate what is told of the Counsellor Hesselts. He was generally asleep during the meeting and when his turn came to vote on a sentence of death, he used to cry out still half asleep: *Ad patibulum! Ad patibulum!* so glibly did his tongue utter this word. It is further to be remarked of this Hesselts that his wife, a daughter of the President Viglius, had expressly stipulated in the marriage contract, that he should resign the dismal office of Attorney for the King, which made him detested by the whole nation. Vigl. ad. Hopp. LXVII. L.

some rare occasions the Duke conferred with a few Members of the latter assembly, but even when this did occur the conference was held in his Cabinet, and was no more than a private conversation, without any of the proper forms being observed. No privilege, no Charter of immunity, however carefully protected had any weight in the Council for Disturbances.*) It compelled all deeds and contracts to be laid before it, and often forced upon them the most strained interpretations and alterations. If the Duke caused a Sentence to be drawn out, which, there was reason to fear, might be opposed by the States of Brabant, it was legalized without the Brabant Seal. The most sacred rights of individuals were assailed, and a tyranny without example forced itself even into the circle of domestic life. As the Non-Catholics and rebels had hitherto contrived to strengthen their party so much by marriage connections with the first families in the country, the Duke issued an Edict, that all Netherlanders, whatever rank or office they might hold, were forbidden under pain of death and confiscation of property, to conclude a marriage without previously addressing him and obtaining his permission.

All, whom the Council for Disturbances thought proper to summon before it, were compelled to

*) Vargas in a few words of barbarous Latin demolished the liberty of the Netherlands. "Non curamus vestros privilegios," he replied to one who wished to plead the immunities of the University of Louvain against him.

appear, clergy as well as laity, the most venerable heads of the Senate as well as the reprobate rabble of the Iconoclasts. Whoever did not present himself, as indeed scarcely anybody did, was banished the country and all his property was confiscated; but those, who did appear, or who could be by any contrivance seized, were lost without redemption. Twenty, forty, often fifty were summoned at the same time and from the same town, and the richest were always the first on whom the thunderbolt descended. The meaner citizens, who possessed nothing, which rendered their country and their homes dear to them, were taken unawares and arrested without any previous citation. Many eminent merchants, who had at their disposal fortunes of from 60,000 to 100,000 florins, were seen with their hands tied behind their backs, like common vagabonds, dragged at the horse's tail to execution, and in Valenciennes, at one time, fifty five persons were decapitated. All the prisons, of which the Duke had built a great number, immediately on commencing his administration, were crammed full of delinquents; hanging, beheading, quartering, burning were the prevailing and ordinary occupations of the day; the punishment of the galleys and banishment were much more rarely heard of, for there was scarcely any offence, which was reckoned too trivial to be punished with death. Immense sums were thus brought into the treasury, which, however, served rather

to excite the new Viceroy's and his Colleagues' thirst for gold, than to quench it. His insane purpose seemed to be, to make the whole nation beggars, and throw all their riches into the hands of the king and his servants. The yearly revenue derived from these confiscations was computed to equal the revenues of a kingdom of the first rank; it is said to have been estimated in the report furnished to the king, at the absolutely incredible amount of twenty millions of dollars. But these proceedings were the more inhuman as they often bore hardest precisely upon those persons, who were the most peaceful subjects and orthodox Catholics, whom they did not want to injure; for on an estate being confiscated all the creditors, who had claims upon it saw themselves defrauded; all the hospitals and public institutions, which such properties had contributed to support, were now ruined, and the poor, who had formerly drawn a pittance from this source, were compelled to see their solitary spring of sustenance dried up. Whoever ventured to pursue their well grounded claims on the property confiscated before the Council of Twelve, (for no other tribunal dared to interfere with these inquiries) consumed their substance in tedious and expensive legal proceedings, and were reduced to beggary before they lived to see the end of them. The histories of civilized states shew scarcely more than one other solitary example of such perversion of the laws,

of such violation of property, of such waste of human life; but Cinna, Sylla, and Marius entered vanquished Rome as incensed victors, and practised at least openly, what the Viceroy of the Netherlands performed under the venerable veil of the laws.

Until the expiration of the year 1567 the king's arrival had still been confidently expected, and the best disposed persons in the nation had placed all their hopes on this last resort. Vessels, which Philip had caused to be equipped expressly for the purpose of meeting him, still continued lying in the haven before Flushing, ready to sail at the first signal; and the town of Brussels had consented to receive a Spanish garrison, simply because the king was to reside within its walls. But this hope too, by degrees gradually vanished, as the king put off the journey from one quarter of the year to another, and the new Viceroy very soon began to display powers, which announced him less as a precursor of royalty, than as an absolute minister, whose presence made that of the king entirely superfluous. To complete the distress of the Provinces, their last good angel was now to leave them in the person of the Regent.

Ever since the time when the Duke's extensive powers left no longer any doubt remaining, as to the termination of her Government, Margaret had formed the resolution of relinquishing the name also of Regent. To see a successor exult-

ing in possession of a dignity, which a nine years enjoyment of it had made indispensable to her; to see the dominion, the glory, the splendour, the adoration and all the attentions, which are the usual concomitants of supreme power, pass over to another; and to feel that she had lost that, which she could never forget she had once possessed, was more than a female's mind could endure; but Duke Alba was of all men the least formed to make her separation from it less painful to her, by a forbearing use of his newly acquired dignity. The tranquillity of the country even, which was jeopardized by this double rule, seemed to impose upon the Dutchess the necessity of abdicating. Many Governors of Provinces refused, without an express order from the Court, to receive commands from the Duke and recognise him as Co-Regent.

The rapid change of their point of attraction could not be met by the Courtiers so composedly and imperturbably, but that the Dutchess observed the alteration, which she felt most bitterly. Even the few, State Counsellor Viglius for example, who adhered to her firmly, did so less from attachment to her person, than from vexation at seeing themselves displaced by novices and foreigners, and because they were too proud, to repeat their apprenticeship under the new Viceroy. By far the greater number could not, with all their endeavours to keep the mean be-

tween the two, conceal the difference of the homage, which they paid to the rising sun, from that which they bestowed on the sinking orb; and the royal palace in Brussels, became more and more deserted and still, the more the throng at Kuilemburg House increased. But what touched the sensitiveness of the Dutchess in the acutest manner, was the arrest of Hoorn and Egmont, which was planned by the Duke in his own mind and executed without her knowledge, and as if there was no such person as herself in the world. Alba endeavoured, indeed, to appease her, immediately after the deed was done, by declaring, that the design had been kept secret from her; only to spare her name from being mixed up in so odious a transaction; but no delicacy could close the wound which had been inflicted on her pride. In order at once to escape all similar insults, of which the present was probably only a forerunner, she despatched her private Secretary Macchiavelli to the Court of her brother, there to urge with the utmost earnestness, that he would allow her to resign the Regency. This was granted without difficulty, but with all the marks of the highest esteem; he put aside (so the king expressed himself) his own advantage and that of the Provinces, in order to oblige his sister. A present of 30,000 dollars accompanied this permission and 20,000 were allotted to her for her

yearly pension *). At the same time a diploma arrived for the Duke of Alba, which declared him, in her stead, Viceroy of all the Netherlands, with unlimited powers.

Very gladly would Margaret have learned that she would be permitted to resign the Regency before a solemn assembly of the States, a wish, which she not very unintelligibly gave the King to understand, but had not the joy to see accomplished. She was especially fond of solemnity, and the example of the Emperor her father, who had exhibited the extraordinary spectacle of his abdication of the crown in this very city, appeared to have infinite attractions for her. As she was now compelled to part with supreme power, she could not be blamed for wishing to do so in as splendid a manner as possible; and as moreover it had not escaped her, how much the general hatred of the Duke had effected in her own favour, she looked wistfully forward to a scene so flattering to her and so affecting.

*) Which however does not appear to have been very punctually paid, if a pamphlet may be trusted, which was printed during her lifetime. (It bears the title: Discours sur la Blessure de Monseigneur Prince d'Orange, 1582 without notice of the place where it was printed, and is to be found in the Elector's library at Dresden.) She languished, it is therein stated at Namur, in poverty, and so badly supported by her son (the then Governor of the Netherlands) that her own Secretary Aldobrandin called her sojourn there an exile. But, it is further added, what better could she expect from a son who when still very young, being on a visit to her at Brussels, snapped his fingers at her, behind her back.

She would have been glad to mingle her own tears with those, which she would have been pleased to see shed by the Netherlanders for their good Regent, and her descent from the throne would have been softened by the general sympathy. Little as she had done, during her nine years administration to merit the general favour, while fortune smiled upon her and the approbation of her Sovereign was the limit to all her wishes, the sympathy of the nation had now proportionably acquired value in her eyes, in that it was the only thing, which could in some degree compensate to her for the disappointment of her other hopes; and she would fain have persuaded herself, that she had become a voluntary sacrifice to her goodness of heart, and her too humane feelings towards the Netherlanders. As the King was very far from intending to incur danger by a general assembly of the nation, in order to gratify a caprice of his sister, she was obliged to content herself with a farewell letter to the States, in which she went over her whole administration, recounted, not without ostentation, all the difficulties with which she had had to struggle, all the evils, which by her dexterity she had prevented, and wound up at last by saying, that she left a finished work, and had to make over to her successor nought but the punishment of offenders. The King too was compelled to hear the same from her repeatedly, and she left nothing


undone to prevent the Duke from reaping the glory, which his successes might undeservedly acquire for him. Her own merits as something, which would not admit of a doubt, but at the same time a burthen oppressive to her modesty, she laid down at the feet of the King.

Dispassionate posterity might nevertheless hesitate to subscribe to this favourable opinion without restriction; even if the united voice of her contemporaries, and the testimony of the Netherlands themselves were for it, the right would still not be withheld from a third party, of subjecting it to a still stricter scrutiny. The easily affected minds of the people are only too much disposed, to count one fault the less, as a virtue the more, and under the weight of a present evil, laud that which is past. The whole force of the Netherlander's hatred seems to have exhausted itself upon the Spanish name; to accuse the Regent as the Authoress of an evil, was to withdraw from the King and his minister curses, which they would rather bestow on them alone and undividedly; and Duke Alba's government in the Netherlands was perhaps not the proper point of view from which to test the merit of his predecessor. It was certainly no light task to meet the king's expectations, without infringing the rights of the Netherlandish people and the duties of humanity; but in struggling to effect these two contradictory objects Margaret had accomplished neither, and had palpably in-

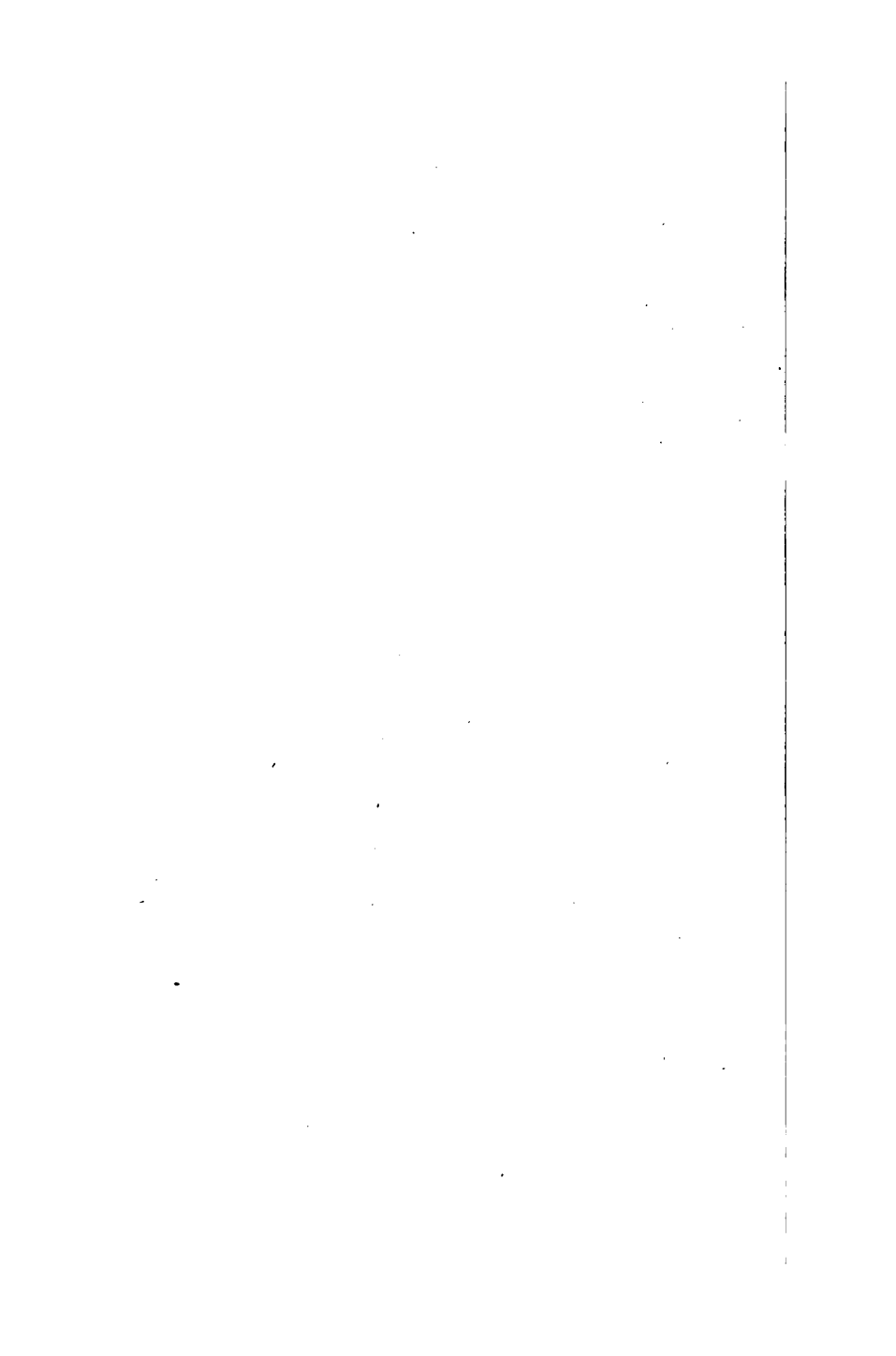
jured the nation too deeply, in comparison of the little service she had done the King. It is true that she at last crushed the Protestant faction, but the accidental outbreak of the Iconoclasts assisted her in this more than all her policy. She certainly dissolved the League of the Nobles by her dexterity, but only after the fatal blow had been struck at its roots by internal dissensions. That, over which she had for many years vainly exhausted her whole policy, was brought about by a single enlistment of troops, for which orders were issued to her from Madrid. She delivered over to the Duke a tranquillized country; but it cannot be denied that the dread of his approach had had the chief share in the tranquillization. By the reports she made she led the Council in Spain astray, because she never informed it of the disease, but only of the casual symptoms, never of the animus and voice of the nation, but only of the misconduct of factions; her faulty administration drew the people into the crime, because she exasperated without sufficiently awing them; she brought the destroying Duke of Alba into the country, because she had led the King to believe that the disturbances in the Provinces were to be attributed, less to the severity of the royal ordinances, than to the unworthiness of those who were charged with their execution. Margaret possessed capacity and intellect, and an acquired political tact enabled her to meet any ordinary

case, but she wanted the creative genius, to invent new maxims for a new and extraordinary emergency, or wisely to overstep old ones. In a country where the best policy was honesty, she entertained the unfortunate idea of practising her insidious Italian policy, and thereby sowed a ruinous distrust in the minds of the people. The compliance, which has been so liberally imputed to her as a merit, had been extorted from her weakness and timidity by the courageous opposition of the nation; she had never raised herself above the letter of the royal commands, by her own spontaneous resolution; never misinterpreted the cruel purport of the commission entrusted to her, from the fair feeling of innate humanity. Even the few concessions, to which necessity compelled her, she granted with an uncertain and shrinking hand, as if she feared to give too much, and she lost the fruit of her benefactions, because she mutilated them by her sordid closeness. What, in all the other relations of her life she was too little, she was on the throne too much — a woman! She had it in her power, after Granvella's expulsion to become the benefactress of the Netherlandish nation, and she did not. Her supreme Good was the approbation of her King, her greatest misfortune his displeasure; with all the eminent qualities of her mind, she remained an ordinary person, because her heart was destitute of native nobility. She used a melancholy power with

much moderation, and stained her government with no arbitrary cruelty; nay if it had depended on her, she would have always acted humanely. Years afterwards, when her idol Philip the 2nd had long forgotten her, the Netherlandish people still honoured her memory; but she was far from deserving the glory, which her successor's inhumanity shed upon her. She left Brussels about the end of December 1567. The Duke escorted her as far as the frontiers of Brabant, and there left her under the protection of the Count of Mansfeld, in order to hasten back to the metropolis, and now shew himself to the Netherlandish people as sole Regent.



SUPPLEMENT.



I.

TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF THE COUNTS OF EGMONT AND HOORN.

The two Counts were, a few weeks after their arrest conveyed to Ghent under an escort of 3000 Spanish soldiers, and confined in the Citadel of that town for more than eight months. Their trial was in due form undertaken by the Council of Twelve, who were appointed by the Duke in Brussels to inquire into the past disturbances, and the Solicitor General John Du Bois had to draw up the charges. The accusation of Egmont contained ninety. It would occupy too much space to introduce them here; and a few specimens have been already given above. Every action however innocent, every omission was regarded in the point of view, which had been fixed upon at the outset, «that both Counts, in conjunction with the Prince of Orange, had

meditated overthrowing the royal authority in the Netherlands and possessing themselves of the government of the Country." Granvella's expulsion, the embassy of Egmont to Madrid, the confederacy of the Geusen, the concessions which the three nobles named above, made to the Protestants in the provinces under their government, — all these things were made to tally with the above scheme, all were declared to have connection and agreement. Thus importance was attached to the most insignificant trifles and one envenomed the other. After care had been taken to treat most of the charges seperately as treasonable offences, it was the more easy to extract a verdict of high treason from the whole together.

The accusations were sent to each of the two prisoners and they were required to reply to them within five days. After having done so they were allowed to employ Advocates and Counsel, who were permitted free access to them. Being accused of treason none of their friends were admitted to see them. Count Egmont employed a gentleman named Von Landas, and a few clever lawyers from Brussels.

Their first step was, to protest against the tribunal which was to try them, as they, as Knights of the Golden Fleece, could be judged only by the king himself as Grand Master of that Order. But this protest was rejected, and they were required to produce their witnesses,

in default of which they would be proceeded against in contumaciam. Egmont had replied to eighty two Counts in the most satisfactory manner; the Count of Hoorn too answered the charges against him, point by point. The documents containing the charges and the defence are still extant; every impartial tribunal would have acquitted the two Counts on the grounds they adduced. The Attorney General pressed for their evidences, and Duke Alba caused repeated commands to be issued to them to use despatch. They delayed from one week to another, while they renewed their protests against the illegality of the Court. At last the Duke limited them to nine days, within which they were to produce their proofs; after they permitted that period also to expire, they were declared to be convicted and to have forfeited all right of defence.

While this trial was being carried on, the relations and friends of the two Counts were not inactive. Egmont's wife, by birth a Dutches of Bavaria, addressed petitions to the Princes of the German Empire, to the Emperor, and to the king of Spain; as did also the Countess of Hoorn, Mother of the imprisoned Count, who was connected by the ties of friendship or of blood with the first royal families of Germany. All protested loudly against this illegal proceeding and appealed to the liberty of the German Empire, on which the Count of Hoorn, as a

Count of the Empire, founded special claims; the liberty of the Netherlands and the privileges of the Order of the Golden Fleece were likewise insisted upon. The Countess of Egmont roused nearly every Court to intercede for her husband; the king of Spain and his Viceroy, were besieged by applications in behalf of the accused, which were referred from one to the other, and made light of by both. The Countess of Hoorn collected certificates from all the knights of the Golden Fleece in Spain, Germany, and Italy to prove the privileges of the Order. Alba rejected them with a declaration that they had no force in the present case. "The crimes of which the Counts were accused related to the affairs of the Netherlandish Provinces, and he, the Duke, was appointed by the king sole judge of all matters connected with those countries." Four months had been allowed to the Attorney General to draw up the accusation and five were granted to the two Counts for their defence. But instead of losing time and trouble in adducing their evidences, which would have profited them but little, they preferred wasting the time, in protests against the judges, which availed them still less. By the former means they would probably have delayed the final sentence, and in the time which they would have thereby gained, the powerful intercession of their friends would perhaps have been efficacious; by obstinately persisting in rejecting the tribunal, which was

to try them, they furnished the Duke with an opportunity of cutting short the proceedings. After the last and extreme period had expired, on the 1st of June 1568, the Council of Twelve declared them guilty, and on the 4th of that month the final sentence was pronounced against them.

The execution of twenty five noble Netherlanders, who were beheaded within three days in the Market Place at Brussels, was the terrible prelude to the fate which awaited the two Counts. John Casembrot von Beckerzeel, Secretary to the Count of Egmont, was one of the unfortunates, who was thus rewarded for his fidelity to his master, which he steadfastly maintained even upon the rack, and for his zeal in the service of the King, which he had manifested against the Iconoclasts. The others were either taken prisoners with arms in their hands in the insurrection of the Geusen, or were apprehended and condemned, as guilty of high treason, on account of their former share in the petition of the nobles.

The Duke had cause to hasten the execution of the sentence. Count Louis of Nassau had given battle to the Count of Aremberg near the monastery of Heiligerlee in Gröningen, and had the good fortune to defeat him. Immediately after his victory he had moved before Gröningen, which he held besieged. The success of his arms had raised the courage of his faction, and the Prince of Orange, his brother, was close at hand

with an army to support him. All this made the presence of the Duke necessary in those distant Provinces; but before the fate of two such important prisoners was decided he durst not venture to leave Brussels. The whole nation was devoted to them with an enthusiastic attachment, which was not a little increased by their unhappy fate. Even the strict Catholic portion, begrudged the Duke the triumph of crushing two men of such importance. A single advantage, which the arms of the rebels might have gained over the Duke, or even the mere invented report of one in Brussels, would have caused a revolution in that town by which the two Counts would have been set at liberty. Added to this, the petitions and intercessions which came to the Viceroy, as well as to the King of Spain, from the German Princes, increased daily; nay the Emperor Maximilian the 2nd himself caused the Countess to be assured: "that she had nothing to fear for the life of her spouse," and these powerful applications might at last have turned the King in favour of the prisoners. Nay, the King might perhaps in reliance on his Viceroy's celerity, assume the appearance of yielding to the representations of so many Sovereigns, and rescind the sentence of death, under the conviction that this mercy would come too late. These were motives sufficient for the Duke, not to delay the execution of the sentence, so soon as it was pronounced.

On the very next day the two Counts were

brought from the citadel of Ghent to Brussels under an escort of 3000 Spaniards, and placed in confinement in the «Brod» House in the great market place. On the next morning the Council of Twelve was assembled; the Duke contrary to his custom attended in person, and both the sentences, in sealed envelopes, were opened by the Secretary Pranz and publicly read. Both Counts were declared guilty of treason, because they had favoured and promoted the abominable conspiracy of the Prince of Orange, protected the Confederate nobles, and been wanting in their duty to their King and the church, in their Governments and other appointments. Both were sentenced to be publicly beheaded, and their heads were to be fixed upon pikes and not taken down without the Duke's express command. All their possessions, fiefs, and rights escheated to the royal treasury. The sentence was signed only by the Duke and the Secretary Pranz without caring for the consent of the other criminal judges.

In the night between the 4th and 5th of June the sentences were brought to the Counts in prison, after they had already gone to sleep. The Duke gave them to the Bishop of Ypres, Martin Rithov, whom he had on that account expressly sent for to Brussels, in order to prepare the prisoners for death. When the Bishop received this Commission, he threw himself at the feet of the Duke, and supplicated him with

tears in his eyes for mercy — at least for respite for the prisoners; whereupon he was answered in a rough and angry voice, that he had been summoned from Ypres, not to oppose the sentence, but by his spiritual consolation to alleviate it to the unhappy Counts.

Egmont was the first to whom the Bishop shewed the sentence of death. "That, is indeed a severe sentence!" exclaimed the Count, pale and in accents of horror. "I did not think that I had offended his Majesty so deeply, as to deserve such treatment. If however it must be so, I submit to this fate with resignation. May this death atone for my sins and may it not injure my wife and children! This, at least, I think, I may expect for my past services. I will suffer death with a composed mind, since it so pleases God and the King." — He then pressed the Bishop to tell him seriously and candidly if there was no hope of pardon. On being answered in the negative, he confessed and received the Sacrament from the Priest, after whom he repeated the mass with the greatest devoutness. He asked him, what prayer was the best and most effective for him to recommend himself to God in his last hour? The Priest replying that that there was no more forcible prayer than the Lord's Prayer, which Christ Himself, the Lord had taught, he prepared immediately to repeat it. The thought of his family interrupted him; he called for pen and ink and wrote two let-

ters, one to his wife, the other to the King in Spain, which latter was as follows: Sire! This morning I have heard the sentence, which your Majesty has been pleased to cause to be pronounced upon me. Far as I have ever been from undertaking anything against the person or the service of your Majesty, or against the only true, ancient and Catholic religion, I nevertheless submit myself with patience to the fate, which it has pleased God to ordain I should suffer. If, during the past disturbances, I have permitted, advised, or done anything that seems at variance with my duty, it has assuredly been done with the best intention, and extorted from me by the force of circumstances. I therefore pray your Majesty to forgive me it, and in consideration of my past services, shew mercy to my unhappy wife, and my poor children and servants. Firmly hoping this, I commend myself to the infinite mercy of God.

Brussels June 5th 1568, near my last moments.

Your Majesty's

most faithful Vassal and Servant,

L a m o r a l C o u n t o f E g m o n t.

This letter he entrusted to the Bishop with the strongest injunctions regarding its transmission; for greater certainty he sent a duplicate of it in his own handwriting to State Counsellor Viglius, the most upright man in the Senate, and there is no doubt that it was actually deli-

vered to the King. The family of the Count subsequently recovered all his property, fiefs and rights, which had in virtue of the sentence, escheated to the royal Treasury.

Meanwhile a scaffold had been erected in the Market place at Brussels, before the Town Hall, on which two poles were fixed with iron spikes, and which was all covered with black cloth. Two and twenty companies of the Spanish garrison surrounded the scaffold, a precaution which was not superfluous. Between 10 and 11 o'clock the Spanish Guard appeared in the apartment of the Count; they were provided with cords to tie his hands according to custom. He begged that this might not be done and declared that he was willing and ready to die. He himself cut off the collar from his doublet to facilitate the executioner's duty. He wore a dressing gown of red damask, and over that a black Spanish cloak bordered with gold lace. In this dress he mounted the scaffold. Don Julian Romero, Maitre de Camp, Salinas, a Spanish Captain, and the Bishop of Ypres followed him. The Grand Provost of the Court, with a red wand in his hand, sate on horseback at the foot of the scaffold; the executioner was concealed under it.

Egmont had at first shewn a desire to make a speech to the people from the scaffold. On the Bishop's however representing to him that he would either not be heard, or even if he

was, he might, in the present dangerous disposition of the people, easily excite them to acts of violence which would only plunge his friends into destruction, he dropped his intention. For a few moments he paced the scaffold with noble bearing, and lamented that it had not been permitted him to die a more glorious death for his King and his country. Up to the last moment he could not persuade himself that the King was in earnest with this severity, and that it would be carried beyond the mere terror of execution. When the decisive moment approached, when he was to receive the Last Sacrament, he looked wistfully round and when still nothing followed, he turned to Julian Romero and asked him once more if there was no hope of pardon for him? Julian Romero shrugged his shoulders, looked on the ground and was silent. Egmont then set his teeth, threw his cloak and dressing gown down, knelt upon the cushion and prepared himself for the last prayer. The Bishop presented him the crucifix to kiss, and gave him Extreme unction upon which the Count made him a sign to leave him. He then drew a silk cap over his eyes and awaited the stroke. — Over the corpse and the streaming blood a black cloth was immediately thrown. All Brussels thronged around the scaffold and felt the fatal blow with him. Loud sobs broke the appalling silence. The Duke, who watched the execution from a window wiped his eyes. Shortly after-

wards the Count of Hoorn was brought up. The latter owing to a more violent temperament than that of his friend, and being stimulated by more reasons for hatred against the King, had received the sentence with less composure although in his case it was less unjust. He had indulged in bitter expressions against the King, and the Bishop had with difficulty prevailed upon him to make a better use of his last moments, than to lose them in execrations against his enemies. At last however he collected himself and confessed to the Bishop, which at first he was disposed to refuse to do. He mounted the scaffold with the same attendants as his friend. In passing he saluted many of his acquaintance; his hands were like Egmont's free, and he was dressed in a black doublet and cloak with a Milan cap of the same colour upon his head. When he had ascended he cast his eyes upon the corpse, which lay under the cloth, and asked one of the bystanders if it was the body of his friend. On being answered in the affirmative, he said some words in Spanish threw his cloak from him and knelt upon the cushion. — All shrieked aloud as he received the fatal blow. Both heads were fixed upon the poles which were set up upon the scaffold, where they remained until past three in the afternoon, when they were taken down and with the two bodies, placed in leaden coffins, and deposited in a vault. In spite of the number

of spies and executioners, who surrounded the scaffold, the citizens of Brussels were not prevented from dipping their handkerchiefs in the streaming blood, and carrying these precious memorials home with them.



II.

SIEGE OF ANTWERP BY THE PRINCE OF PARMA IN THE YEARS 1584 and 1585.

It is an interesting spectacle, to observe man's inventive genius contending with a powerful element, and to see difficulties, which are insurmountable to ordinary capacities, overcome by prudence, resolution, and a determined will. Less attractive but so much the more instructive is the contray spectacle, where the absence of those qualities renders all efforts of genius vain, makes fortuitous advantages useless, and, from ignorance how to employ such favorable chances, destroys a result almost decided. Examples of both are afforded to us in the celebrated blockade of the town of Antwerp, by the Spaniards, towards the close of the 16th century, by which that flourishing emporium was irrecoverably robbed of its prosperity, but which, on the other hand conferred immortal fame on the General, who undertook and carried it out.

Twelve years had the war continued, by which the northern provinces of Belgium strove, at first, merely to vindicate their religious freedom and the privileges of their States against the encroachments of the Spanish Viceroy, but at last to establish their independence of the Spanish crown. Never completely victors but never entirely vanquished, they wearied out the Spanish valour by tedious operations in an unpropitious soil, and exhausted the Sovereign of both the Indies, while they were themselves styled beggars, and in a degree actually were so. The League of Ghent was, indeed, dissolved, which had united the whole Netherlands, Catholic and Protestant, in a common and, could it have lasted, invincible body; but in lieu of this insecure and unnatural combination, the northern provinces had in the year 1579 joined in the closer union of Utrecht, which promised to continue longer, as it was linked and held together by a like political and religious interest. What the new Republic had lost in extent, through this separation from the Catholic Provinces, it had gained in the closeness of its union, in the unity of enterprise, and in energy of execution, and it was fortunate in timely losing, what after exhausting all its powers it would still never have been able to retain.

The greater number of the Walloon provinces were in the year 1584, partly by voluntary submission and partly by force of arms, again

brought under the dominion of the Spaniards; in the northern districts alone they had never been able to plant themselves firmly. A considerable portion of Brabant even and Flanders, still obstinately resisted the arms of the Duke Alexander of Parma, who administered the internal government of the provinces and the supreme command of the army with equal skill and energy, and by a series of victories restored afresh the splendour of the Spanish name. The peculiar formation of the country, which favoured the connection of the towns with one another and with the sea, by the numerous rivers and canals, retarded all attempts at subduing it, and the possession of one place could only be obtained by the occupation of another. So long as this communication was not stopped, Holland and Zealand could with little trouble protect their allies, and supply them abundantly by water as well as by land with all necessaries, so that all valour was of no use and the troops of the king were fruitlessly destroyed in tedious sieges.

Amongst all the towns of Brabant, Antwerp was the most important, as well from its wealth, its population, and its military force as by its position on the mouth of the Scheld. This great and populous town, which then reckoned above 80,000 inhabitants, was one of the most active partners in the national League of the Netherlands, and had in the course of the war distinguished itself above all the towns of Belgium,

by an untameable spirit of liberty. As it fostered in its lap all the three Christian Churches, and owed a great portion of its prosperity to this unrestricted religious liberty, it had therefore the most to fear from the Spanish rule, which threatened to abolish this tolerance, and by the terror of the Inquisition to scare all Protestant merchants from its mart. Moreover it knew by terrible experience the brutality of the Spanish garrisons, and it was easy to foresee, that if it once more suffered this insupportable yoke to be imposed upon it, it would not free itself again, during the whole course of the year.

But great as were the motives, which stimulated the town of Antwerp to keep the Spaniards outside its walls, the reasons, which the Spanish general had to make himself master of the place, were equally strong. On the occupation of this town depended, in a manner, the possession of the whole province of Brabant, which derived its supplies of corn from Zealand chiefly by this channel, and by the capture of the place the dominion of the Scheld was at the same time secured. The Brabant League, which held its meetings in the town, would with it lose its most important support; the dangerous influence of its example, its counsels and its money on the whole faction would be stopped, and a rich resource opened for the military exigencies of the king, in the treasures of its inhabitants. Its

fall would, sooner or later, necessarily draw after it the fall of all Brabant, and turn the preponderance of power in that quarter decisively in favour of the king. Impelled by the cogency of these reasons the Duke of Parma drew his forces together in July 1584, and advanced from his position at Dornick to the neighbourhood of Antwerp, with the intention of investing it.

But both the natural position and the fortifications, of the town appeared to defy all attacks. Surrounded on the Brabant side with insurmountable works and wet ditches, and towards Flanders covered by the broad and rapid stream of the Scheld, it could not be carried by storm; and to blockade a town of such extent seemed to require a landforce three times larger than that, which the Duke had, and moreover a fleet of which he was utterly destitute. It was not enough that the river brought all necessary supplies in abundance from Ghent, the same stream opened also an easy communication with the bordering province of Zealand. For as the tide of the North sea extends far up the Scheld, and the ebb and flow of the same changes periodically, Antwerp enjoys the peculiar advantage, that the same stream flows past it at different times in two opposite directions. Add to this that the adjacent towns of Brussels, Malines, Ghent, Dendermonde and others, were all then in the hands of the League, and could aid in supplying the place from the land side also. It

therefore required two different armies, one on each bank of the river, to blockade the town by land, and cut off its communication with Flanders and Brabant; at the same time a sufficient number of vessels was needed to close the Scheld and frustrate all attempts to relieve the town, which would infallibly be made from Zealand. But the army of the Duke was reduced by the war, which he had still to carry on in other districts, and by the numerous garrisons, which he was compelled to leave in the towns, and fortified places, to 10,000 infantry and 1,700 horse, much too small a force, to achieve an undertaking of such magnitude. Moreover the most necessary supplies for these troops were deficient, and their pay being in arrears, had long since excited them to subdued murmurs which hourly threatened to break out into open mutiny. If, notwithstanding, in defiance of all these obstacles, the siege was ventured upon, everything was to be feared from the strongholds of the enemy, which were left in the rear, and from which it would be easy, by vigorous sallies, to annoy an army distributed in so many places, and to expose it to want by cutting off its supplies. On all these arguments, the Council of War, to which the Duke of Parma now opened his scheme, laid much stress. However great the confidence, which they placed in themselves and in the proved abilities of such a leader, nevertheless, the most experienced generals

did not disguise how much they despaired of a fortunate result. Two only were exceptions, Capizucchi, and Mondragon, whom the ardour of their courage placed above all apprehension; the rest all dissuaded the Duke from so hazardous an enterprise, by which they would risk forfeiting the fruit of all their former victories and all the glory they had earned.

But objections, which he had himself already made and refuted, could not make the Duke of Parma waver in his purpose. Not from ignorance of the dangers connected with it, not from thoughtlessly overvaluing his force, had he taken this bold resolve. That instinct of genius, which conducts great men by paths, which those of inferior minds, either do not enter at all, or whose end they do not reach, raised him above all doubts, which a cool but narrow prudence placed before him, and without being able to convince his generals, he perceived the truth of his calculations in an indistinct, but not on that account less certain conviction. A succession of fortunate results had raised his confidence, and a glance at his army, to which Europe could not then shew an equal in discipline; experience and valour, and which was commanded by a select body of the most distinguished officers, did not permit him for a moment to entertain a fear. To those, who objected to him the small number of his troops he answered, that however long the pike it is only the point that kills, and that

in military enterprise, the moving power was of more importance than the mass to be moved. He knew indeed the discontent of his troops, but he knew also their obedience; and he besides hoped to meet their private grievances best, by employing them in an important undertaking, by stimulating their desire of glory by the splendour of the enterprise, and their rapacity by the high prize which the conquest of so wealthy a town promised to them.

In the plan, which he now formed for the siege he endeavoured effectually to meet all the above various impediments. The only force by which it could be hoped to subdue the town was that of hunger; and to raise this formidable enemy against it, all access to it by water and land must be closed. In order in the first place, if not entirely to cut off, at least to impede the bringing of supplies from Zealand, it was requisite to carry all the outworks, which the Antwerpians had built on both shores of the Scheld for the protection of their vessels, and where feasible to throw up new batteries from which the whole course of the river could be commanded. That the town, however, might not meanwhile draw supplies from the interior of the country, while efforts were being made to intercept their transmission by sea, all the adjacent towns of Brabant and Flanders were to be comprehended in the plan of the siege, and the fall of Antwerp was to be based on the fall

of all those places. A bold, and if the scanty force of the Duke is considered, an almost extravagant project, which was, however, justified by the genius of its author, and which fortune crowned with a brilliant result.

As however time was required, to accomplish a plan of this magnitude, they contented themselves for the present, with constructing numerous forts on the canals and rivers which connected Antwerp with Dendermonde, Ghent, Malines, Brussels and other places and thereby impeding the transit of supplies. At the same time Spanish garrisons were quartered in the vicinity of those towns, and as it were at their very gates, which laid waste the open country and by their incursions made the surrounding districts unsafe. Thus round Ghent alone were encamped about 3000 men and proportionable numbers round the other towns. In this manner and by means of the secret understanding, which he held with the Catholic inhabitants of those towns, the Duke hoped, without weakening himself, to gradually exhaust those towns, and by the distresses of a petty but unceasing warfare, even without any formal siege, to reduce them at last to capitulate. Meanwhile the main force was directed against Antwerp, where he formed a fortified camp. The Flanders bank of the Scheld was given to the Margrave of Rysburg, General of cavalry, the Brabant bank to the Count Peter Ernest von Mansfeld, who

was joined by another Spanish leader, Mondragon. Both the latter succeeded in crossing the Scheld upon pontoons, without the Antwerp Admiral's ship, which was sent against them, being able to hinder them, and passing round in rear of Antwerp they took up their position at Stabroek in the district of Bergen. Single detached corps dispersed themselves along the whole Brabant side, partly in order to secure the dams, partly to close the roads by land.

Some miles below Antwerp the Scheld was guarded by two strong forts, of which one was situated at Liefkenshoek on the island Doel in Flanders, the other at Lillo exactly opposite on the Brabant coast. The last had been formerly erected by Mondragon himself, at the command of the Duke of Alba, when the latter was still master of Antwerp, and for this very reason the attack upon it was now entrusted to him by the Duke of Parma. On the possession of these two forts appeared to depend the whole success of the siege, because all the vessels, which sailed from Zealand to Antwerp were obliged to pass under their guns. Both forts had, moreover, been a short time before strengthened by the Antwerpians, and they had not quite finished the first, when the Margrave of Rysburg attacked it. The celerity with which he went to work, surprised the enemy, before they were sufficiently prepared for defence; and a coup de main directed against Liefkenshoek, brought that fort into the

hands of the Spaniards. The confederates sustained this loss on the same fatal day, that the Prince of Orange fell by the hands of an assassin at Delft. The remaining batteries also, which had been erected on the island of Doel, were partly voluntarily abandoned by their defenders, partly taken by surprise, so that in a short time the whole Flanders side was cleared of the enemy. But the fort at Lills, on the Brabant shore, offered a resistance the more vigorous, as the Antwerpians had had time given them to strengthen it, and provide it with a resolute garrison. Furious sallies of the besieged led by Odets von Teligny, supported by the cannon of the fort, destroyed all the works of the Spaniards, and an inundation, which was effected by opening the sluices, finally drove them away from the place after a three week's siege and with the loss of nearly two thousand killed. They now retired into their fortified camp at Stabroek and contented themselves with taking possession of the dams, which cut off the lower land from Bergen, and oppose a breastwork to the encroachments of the East Scheld.

The failure of his attempt upon the fort of Lillo altered the measures of the Duke of Parma. As he had not succeeded in this way in stopping the passage of vessels up the Scheld, on which the whole success of the siege depended, he determined to close the stream completely by a bridge. The thought was bold and there were

many, who held it to be rash. The breadth of the stream, which at this part exceeds 12,00 yards, as well as its violence, which is still further augmented by the tide of the adjoining sea, appeared to render every attempt of this kind impracticable; in addition to this there was the deficiency of timber, of vessels, of workmen, and moreover the dangerous position between the Antwerpian and Zealand fleet, to whom it would necessarily be an easy task, in conjunction with a boisterous element, to interrupt a work of so tedious a nature. But the Duke of Parma knew his power, and impossibilities alone could subdue his determined courage. After he had caused the breadth as well as the depth of the river to be measured, and had consulted with two of his most skilful engineers, Barocci and Plato, it was resolved to construct the bridge between Calloo in Flanders, and Ordam in Brabant. This site was selected, because the river was here narrowest and turned a little to the right, which detained vessels and compelled them to tack. To cover the bridge, strong bastions were erected at both ends, of which the one on the Flanders shore was named fort St. Maria, the other on the Brabant side fort St. Philip, in honor of the King.

While the most vigorous preparations were being made in the Spanish camp for the execution of this scheme, and the whole attention of the enemy was directed to it, the Duke made an unexpected attack upon Dendermonde, a very

strong town between Ghent and Antwerp, where the Dender flows into the Scheld. As long as this important place was in the hands of the enemy the towns of Ghent and Antwerp could mutually support each other, and by the facility of their communication, frustrate all the efforts of the besiegers. Its capture would leave the Duke's hand free against both towns, and might decide the whole success of his undertaking. The celerity with which he fell upon it, left the besieged no time to open their sluices and lay the surrounding country under water. The chief bastion of the town, before the Brussels gate, was forthwith hotly cannonaded, but the fire of the besieged made great havoc amongst the Spaniards. Instead of being discouraged by this, their ardour only increased, and the insults of the garrison, who mutilated the statue of a Saint before their eyes, and hurled it down from the rampart after treating it in the most contumelious manner raised their fury to the highest pitch. They clamorously demanded to be led against the bastion, before their fire had made a sufficient breach, and the Duke to avail himself of this ardour while fresh, gave the signal to storm. After a sanguinary contest of two hours, the rampart was mounted, and those, who were not sacrificed to the first fury of the Spaniards, threw themselves into the town. The place was, indeed, now more exposed to the hostile fire, which was directed upon it from the fortifications, which had been carried;

but its strong walls and the broad wet ditch, which surrounded it, left room to fear a protracted resistance. The enterprising spirit of the Duke of Parma in a short time vanquished this obstacle also. While the bombardment was carried on night and day, the troops were compelled to work incessantly, at diverting the course of the Dender, from which the fosse was supplied with water, and the besieged were seized with despair, as they saw the water of the ditch, the only still remaining defence of the town, gradually disappear. They hastened to capitulate, and in August 1584 received a Spanish garrison. In the space of not more than eleven days this undertaking was executed, which, according to the opinion of competent judges, appeared to require as many weeks.

The town of Ghent, now cut off from Antwerp and the sea, pressed more and more by the troops of the King, which were encamped in its vicinity, and without any hope of near relief, now despaired of its delivery, and beheld famine, with all its train, advancing with terrible steps. It despatched therefore deputies to the Spanish camp at Bevern, to tender its submission to the King upon the same terms, as the Duke had a short time previously offered in vain. The Deputies were informed, that the time for treaties was past, and that an unconditional submission alone could appease the enraged monarch. Nay, threats were even held out, that

the same humiliation would be required from them, as their rebellious ancestors were forced to undergo under Charles the Vth, namely, the imploring pardon half naked, and with a cord round their throats. The Deputies returned disconsolate, but again, on the third day, a new embassy made its appearance, which at last, at the intercession of one of the Duke of Parma's friends, who was a prisoner in Ghent, obtained peace upon moderate terms. The town was compelled to pay a mulct of 200,000 florins, recall the banished papists, and expel its protestant inhabitants, except six, who were marked out for punishment, but were nevertheless subsequently pardoned, and the garrison, which amounted to 2,000 men were allowed to evacuate the place with the honors of war. This treaty was concluded in September of the same year, at the Headquarters at Bevern, and immediately 3,000 Spaniards marched into the town as garrison.

It was more by the terror of his name and the dread of famine, than by the force of arms that the Duke of Parma had subdued this city, the largest and strongest in the Netherlands, which did not yield to Paris in the circumference of its inner town and consisted of 37,000 houses and twenty islands, which were connected by ninety eight stone bridges. Splendid privileges, which this place had contrived to extort from its rulers, in the course of several centuries,

nourished the spirit of independence in its citizens, which not unfrequently degenerated into insolence and audacity, and was very naturally at variance with the maxims of the Austrian-Spanish government. And it was exactly this courageous spirit of liberty, which procured for the Reformation, rapid and extensive success in this town, and both incentives together produced all those scenes of violence, by which, during the Netherlandish war, it had unfortunately distinguished itself. Besides the sum of money, which the Duke of Parma now levied upon the town, he found within the walls a rich store of artillery, carriages, as well as vessels, and building materials of all kinds, with the requisite number of workmen and sailors, by which he was not a little aided in his undertaking against Antwerp.

Before Ghent surrendered to the King, the towns of Vilvorden and Herentals had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, and the block-houses near the village of Willebroeck had been occupied by them, by which Antwerp was cut off from Brussels and Malines. The loss of all these places, which fell within so short a time, deprived the Antwerpians of all hope of succour from Brabant and Flanders, and restricted all their expectations to the assistance, which was looked for from Zealand, and to prevent which the Duke of Parma now made the most energetic preparations. The citizens of Antwerp

had beheld the first movements of the enemy against their town with the proud security, with which the sight of their invincible river inspired them. This confidence was also in a degree justified by the opinion of the prince of Orange, who upon the first intimation of this siege said, that the Spanish army would perish before the walls of Antwerp. That he might not however neglect anything, which might serve for the defence of the town, he sent, a short time before his assassination, for the Burgomaster of Antwerp, Philip Marnix of St. Aldegonde, his intimate friend, to Delft, where he consulted with him regarding the means of maintaining the place. His advice was to demolish forthwith the great dam between Sanvliet and Lillo, called the Blaaugarendyk, in order, as soon as there might be occasion, to let out the water of the East Scheld over the low land of Bergen and open a passage for the Zealand vessels to the town, over the inundated fields, if ever the Scheld should happen to be closed. Aldegonde had after his return actually persuaded the Magistrate and the majority of the citizens to agree to this proposal, when the guild of butchers resisted it, and complained that they would be thereby deprived of their livelihood; for the plain, which they wished to lay under water, was a vast tract of pasture land, upon which about 12,000 oxen were annually put to graze. The butchers carried their object and managed to prevent the

execution of this salutary scheme, until the enemy had got possession of the dams as well as the pasture land.

At the suggestion of the Burgomaster St. Aldegonde who, himself a member of the States of Brabant, was possessed of great authority in that Council, the fortifications on both sides the Scheld had, a short time before the arrival of the Spaniards, been placed in repair, and many new redoubts erected round the town. The dams had been cut through at Saftingen, and the water of the West Scheld let out over nearly the whole country of Waes. In the adjacent marquisate of Bergen troops had been enlisted by the Count of Hohenlohe, and a regiment of Scotchmen, under the command of Colonel Morgan, was already in the pay of the Republic, while fresh reinforcements were expected from England and France. Above all, however, the States of Holland and Zealand were called upon for the most expeditious aid. But after the enemy had planted themselves firmly on both sides the river, and by the fire of their batteries made navigation dangerous, after place in Brabant had fallen into their hands, and their cavalry had closed all communication from the land side, the inhabitants of Antwerp began at last to entertain serious apprehensions for the future. The town then contained 85,000 souls, and according to calculation 300,000 hundredweights of corn were annually required for

their support. For the laying in of such a store neither the supply nor the money was at the beginning of the siege at all wanting; for in spite of the fire of the enemy the Zealand victualling ships contrived to make their way to the town with the floodtide. All that was requisite therefore was to prevent any of the richer citizens from buying up these supplies, and then, in case of scarcity obtaining the command of the price. A certain Gianibelli from Mantua, who had settled in the town and in the subsequent part of the siege rendered it very signal service, proposed that in order to secure this object, a tax of one penny per cent should be imposed and a company of respectable persons formed, which should purchase corn with this money and deliver it weekly. The richer classes should meanwhile advance the amount and hold the supplies purchased, as it were in deposit, in their magazines, and also share in the profit. But this proposal did not satisfy the richer inhabitants, who had resolved to derive advantage from the general distress. They insisted rather that every individual should be commanded to provide himself with the necessary stores for two years; a proposition, by which they took very good care of themselves, but provided very badly for the poorer inhabitants, who could not so much as supply themselves for so many months. They obtained indeed thereby the object, of either entirely expelling the

latter from the town or of making them their dependents; but when they afterwards reflected, that in the time of need their property would not be respected, they found it adviseable not to be overhasty in purchasing up the provisions.

The magistrate of the town in order to avert an evil, that would have pressed upon individuals only, chose in place of it another, which was dangerous to all. Some enterprising persons in Zealand had freighted a considerable fleet with provisions, which succeeded in passing the guns of the enemy and discharged its cargo at Antwerp. The hope of a large profit had encouraged the merchants to this hazardous speculation; in this expectation however, they found themselves deceived when they arrived, as the Magistrate of Antwerp had just then issued an Edict, by which the price of all the necessaries of life was considerably lowered. In order at the same time to prevent individuals from buying up the whole cargo, and storing it in their magazines with a view to dispose of it afterwards so much the dearer, he ordered that the whole of it should be publicly sold from the vessels. The speculators cheated of the profit of their venture by these precautions, hurriedly hoisted sail and left Antwerp with the greatest part of their cargo, which would have sufficed for the support of the town during several months.

This neglect of the most immediate and natural

means of preservation can only be explained on the supposition, that it was then considered absolutely impossible to close the Scheld entirely, and that therefore not the least apprehension was seriously entertained that things would come to extremity. When, therefore, intelligence was brought, that the Duke intended to throw a bridge over the Scheld, this idea was universally ridiculed in Antwerp as chimerical. An arrogant comparison was drawn between the republic and the stream, and it was said, that the one would bear the Spanish yoke as little as the other. "A river which is 2,400 feet broad, and, with its own water alone, is above sixty feet deep, but which when raised by the seatide is wont to rise twelve feet more — would such a stream, it was asked, admit of being controuled by a wretched paling? Where would trunks of trees be procured, high enough to reach to the bottom and project above the surface? and a work of this kind was to be performed in winter, when the flood would drive whole islands and mountains of ice, which stone walls would hardly resist, against its weak timbers and splinter them to pieces like glass? Or did the Duke purpose constructing a bridge of boats; whence would he procure the latter and how bring them into his entrenchments? They must necessarily be brought past Antwerp, where a fleet was ready to capture or sink them."

But while, in the town, they were trying to prove the absurdity of the Duke of Parma's

undertaking, he had brought it to a conclusion. As soon as the forts St. Maria and St. Philip had been erected, which covered the workmen and the work by their guns, a pier was built into the stream from both shores, for which purpose the masts of the largest vessels were used. By the skilful arrangement of the timbers, they contrived to give the whole such solidity, that, as the result proved, it was able to resist the violent pressure of the ice. These timbers, which rested firmly and securely on the bottom of the river, and yet projected above it to a tolerable height, were covered with planks, which formed a commodious passage. This was so broad that eight men abreast had room upon it, and a balustrade that ran along it on both sides, served as a defence against the fire of small arms from the enemy's vessels. This "Estacade", as it was called, ran from the two opposite shores as far into the stream, as the increasing depth and force of the stream allowed. It reduced the stream to about 11,00 feet; as, however, the middle and proper current would absolutely not admit of any stoppage, there remained therefore, between the two Estacades, a space of more than six hundred paces, through which a whole fleet of transports could sail with ease. This intervening space the Duke designed to close by a bridge of boats, for which purpose the craft from Dunkirk were to be employed. But, besides that they could not be procured in any number at that place, it would

be difficult to bring them past Antwerp without great loss. He was therefore obliged to content himself in the interim, with having narrowed the stream to one half, and rendering the passage of the enemy's vessels so much the more difficult. For, where the Estacades terminated in the middle of the stream, they were both enlarged into a parallelogram, which was strongly fortified with guns and served as a kind of fortress in the middle of the water. From these a heavy fire was kept up on all vessels, which ventured to pass through this narrow channel, which, however, did not prevent whole fleets, and single vessels, from successfully running through this dangerous strait.

Meanwhile Ghent surrendered and this unexpectedly rapid success at once rescued the Duke from his dilemma. He found in that town every thing necessary to complete his bridge of boats, and the only difficulty was to bring them to the spot in safety. The most natural way for effecting this, was opened to him by the enemy themselves. By cutting the dams at Saftingen, a great part of the district Waes, as far as the village Borcht, had been laid under water, so that it was not at all difficult to cross the fields with flat-bottomed boats. The Duke therefore made his vessels run out from Ghent, and ordered them, after passing Dendermonde and Rupelmonde, to pass through the left dam of the Scheld, leaving Antwerp to the right, and enter the inundated

fields in the direction of Borcht. To secure this passage a fort was erected at the village of Borcht, which would keep the enemy in check. All succeeded as was desired, though not without a sharp action with the enemy's flotilla, which was sent out to interrupt this convoy. After cutting through a few more dams on their route, they reached the Spanish quarters at Calloo, and entered the Scheld successfully. The exultation of the army was so much the greater, when it was discovered, what great danger the vessels had but just escaped. For scarce had they got quit of the enemy's vessels, when a strong reinforcement of the latter, got under way from Antwerp, commanded by the valiant defender of Lillo, Ordet von Teligny. When this officer saw that the work was done and that the enemy had escaped, he took possession of the dam through which their fleet had passed, and threw up a fort on the spot in order to stop the passage to vessels from Ghent, which might attempt to follow them.

By this the Duke of Parma was again thrown into embarrassment. As yet he was far from having a sufficient number of vessels, either for the construction of the bridge, or for its defence, and the way by which the former convoy was brought was closed by the Fort of Teligny. While he was reconnoitring the neighbourhood to discover a new way for his fleets, a thought occurred to him, which not only put an end to his present dilemma, but at once gave the whole

undertaking a vigorous impulse. Not far from the village of Stecken, in the district Waes, from which place there remained about 5,000 paces to the commencement of the inundation, flows the Moer, a small stream, which falls into the Scheld near Ghent. From this river he caused a canal to be conducted as far as the place, where the inundations began, and as the water was not every where deep enough, the canal between Bevern and Verrebroek was continued to Calloo, where it was met by the Scheld. Five hundred pioneers laboured without intermission at this work, and in order to cheer the toil of the soldiers, the Duke himself took part in it. In this manner he renewed the example of two celebrated Romans, Drusus and Corbulo, who by similar works united the Rhine with the Zuyderzee, and the Maes with the Rhine.

This canal, which the army in honor of its author, called the canal of Parma, extended 14,000 paces, and had a proportionable depth and breadth, so as to be navigable for very considerable vessels. It afforded to the vessels from Ghent not only a more secure, but also a decidedly shorter course to the Spanish Quarters, because it was no longer necessary for them, to follow the extensive windings of the Scheld, but they entered the Moer direct, near Ghent, and thence passing close to Stecken, proceeded through the canal, and across the inundated country as far as Calloo. As the produce of all

Flanders was brought to the town of Ghent, this canal placed the Spanish camp in connection with the whole province. From all quarters the redundant produce flowed into the camp so that during the whole course of the siege the Spaniards suffered no further want. But the most important advantage, which the Duke derived from this work, was an adequate supply of flat bottomed vessels, by which he was enabled to complete the construction of his bridge.

Amid these preparations the winter had arrived, which, as the Scheld was filled with drift ice, occasioned a tolerably long cessation in the construction of the bridge. The Duke had looked forward to this season with apprehension, that it might be in the highest degree detrimental to the work he had commenced, and favour the enemy in making a serious attack upon it. But the skill of his engineers saved him from the one danger, and the inconsistency of the enemy freed him from the other. It frequently happened indeed, that at flood tide large pieces of ice were entangled in the timbers, and shook them violently, but they stood, and the assault of the furious element only made their stability more apparent.

Meanwhile an important interval of time was spent in Antwerp in futile deliberations, and in the contest of factions, the general welfare was neglected. The government of the town was divided amongst far too many persons, and much

too great a share in it was given to the riotous mob, for it to be possible to consult with calmness, to choose with judgment, and execute with firmness. Besides the proper Magistracy, in which the Burgomaster had only a single voice, there existed in the town a number of corporations, to whom belonged the charge of the external and internal security, the provisioning of the town, its fortifications, the marine, commerce, and the like, and who could not be passed over in any business of importance. Through this crowd of speakers, who, as often as they pleased, raised an uproar in the Council, and managed to carry through by clamour and the number of their adherents, what they could not have done by their arguments, the people obtained a dangerous influence in the public debates, and the natural struggle of such opposite interests retarded the execution of every salutary measure. So vacillating and impotent a government, could not make itself respected among insolent sailors, and an overbearing soldiery; hence the orders of the state obtained but imperfect obedience, and the decisive moment was more than once lost by the neglect, not to say the open mutiny, even of the troops and sailors.

The little harmony in the selection of the means, by which the enemy were to be opposed, would not however have been nearly so injurious, if they had but fully concurred in their object. But on this very point the wealthy ci-

tizens and the multitude were divided into two opposite parties, for the former, not without reason, entertained the greatest apprehension of carrying things to extremity, and were therefore much inclined to negotiate with the Duke of Parma. This disposition they no longer concealed after the Fort of Liefkenshoek had fallen into the enemy's hands, and fears were seriously entertained for the navigation of the Scheld. Some citizens of this class withdrew entirely, and left the town, whose prosperity they had shared, but in whose adversity they were unwilling to bear a part, to its fate. From sixty to seventy of those who remained presented a memorial to the Council, in which they expressed a wish, that terms should be made with the king. As soon, however, as the people got intelligence of this, they broke out into furious excitement, and could with difficulty be appeased by the imprisonment and fining of the petitioners. Nor was the disturbance entirely quieted, until an Edict was passed, which imposed the penalty of death, for every attempt, whether public or private, at restoring peace.

None of these commotions escaped the knowledge of the Duke of Parma, who maintained a secret understanding as well in Antwerp as in the other towns of Brabant and Flanders, where he was well served by his spies, and he did not fail to derive advantage from them. Although he had advanced far enough in his preparations,

to distress the town, there remained, however, many steps to be taken before he could actually make himself master of it, and a single unlucky moment might destroy the work of many months. Without, therefore, neglecting any of his warlike preparations, he made one more earnest attempt, to see if he could get possession of the town by fair means. With this object, in November of that year, he despatched a letter to the great Council of Antwerp, in which every art was used either to prevail on the citizens to surrender, or at least to increase the dissensions among them. He treated them in this letter in the light of persons, who had been led astray, and threw the whole blame of their defection and their refractoriness hitherto, upon the intriguing spirit of the Prince of Orange, from whom the retributive justice of Heaven, had a short time before liberated them. «It was,» he said, «now in their power to awaken from their long delusion and return to a king, who was disposed to be reconciled to them. For this end, he continued, he gladly offered himself as mediator, as he had never ceased to love a country, in which he had been born and where he had spent the happiest part of his youth. He therefore exhorted them to send plenipotentiaries to him, with whom he could treat of peace, gave them hopes of the most reasonable terms, if they made a timely submission, but also threatened them with the most rigorous

treatment, if they allowed things to be carried to extremity. »

This letter, in which one is glad not to find again the language, which the Duke of Alba had been accustomed ten years before to employ on similar occasions, was answered by the townspeople in a respectful and becoming tone, and while they did full justice to the personal character of the Duke, and mentioned his favourable intentions towards them with gratitude, they lamented the hardness of the times, which did not allow him to treat them in accordance with his character and disposition. They declared that they would gladly place their fate in his hands, if he were absolute master of his actions, and not obliged to obey the will of another, which his own candour could not possibly approve. The unalterable resolution of the king of Spain was only too well known, as well as the vow which he had made to the Pope; in that quarter all their hopes were gone. They at the same time defended with noble warmth the memory of the Prince of Orange, their benefactor and preserver, while they enumerated the true causes, which had produced this unhappy war, and had made the Provinces secede from the Spanish crown. At the same time they did not dissemble, that they had even now hopes of finding a new and a kinder Sovereign in the King of France, and that, if only for this reason, they could not enter into any treaty with the Spanish King,

without incurring the charge of the most culpable thoughtlessness and ingratitude. The United Provinces, in fact, dispirited by a succession of reverses, had at last come to the determination of placing themselves under the supremacy of France, and preserving their existence and their ancient privileges by the sacrifice of their independence. An embassy had not long since been despatched to Paris with this commission, and it was the prospect of this powerful assistance, which principally supported the courage of the Antwerpians. Henry the Third, King of France, was himself not indisposed to accept this offer; but the troubles, which the intrigues of the Spaniards contrived to excite in his own kingdom, compelled him against his will to give it up. The Netherlanders now turned with their request to Queen Elizabeth of England, who afforded them indeed vigorous assistance, but only when too late to save Antwerp. While in that town the issue of these negotiations was awaited, and future aid expected from foreign powers, the most natural and immediate means of preservation were neglected, and the whole winter lost, which the enemy so much better understood how to employ.

The Burgomaster of Antwerp, St. Aldegonde, indeed, had not failed to urge the Zealand fleet repeatedly to make an attack on the enemy's works, which would be supported from Antwerp. The long and frequently tempestuous

nights would favour this attempt, and if the garrison at Lillo ventured a sally at the same time, it would be hardly possible for the enemy to withstand this triple assault. But unfortunately, misunderstandings had arisen between the Commander of the fleet, William von Blois von Treslong, and the Admiralty of Zealand, which caused the equipment of the fleet to be delayed in a manner quite incomprehensible. In order to accelerate this, Teligny at last resolved, to go himself to Middelburg, where the States of Zealand were assembled; but as the enemy had occupied all the roads, this attempt cost him his freedom, and the republic its most valiant defender. However, enterprising vessels were not wanting, which, under favour of the night and with the floodtide, passed the then still open bridge, in spite of the enemy's fire, threw provisions into the town and returned with the ebb. As however many such vessels fell into the hands of the enemy, the Council ordered that they should never venture out in less than a certain number, from which it happened that none went, because the required number was never completed. Several attempts also were made from Antwerp on the ships of the Spaniards, which were not entirely unsuccessful; some of the latter were captured, others sunk, and all that was required was to execute similar attempts on a grand scale. But however zealously St. Aldegonde urged this, still not a

captain was to be found, who would go on board a vessel for that purpose.

Amid these delays the winter expired and it was scarce observed, that the ice was disappearing, when the construction of the bridge of boats was recommenced by the besiegers, with the utmost earnestness. Between the two piers there still remained a space to be filled up of more than 600 paces, which was effected in the following manner. They took thirty two «Playten» or flat bottomed vessels each 66 feet long and 20 broad and fastened them together with strong cables and iron chains, but so that they were still distant from each other about twenty feet, and allowed the stream a free passage. Each Playten was besides moored with two cables, as well up, as down the stream, but which, as the water rose with the tide, or sunk with the ebb, could be slackened or tightened. From vessel to vessel great masts were laid, which when covered with planks, formed a regular road, and like the piers were lined with a railing. This bridge of boats, of which the two piers only formed a continuation, had, including the latter, a length of 2,4000 paces. This formidable work was so ingeniously constructed, and so richly furnished with instruments of death, that, like a living creature, it could defend itself, and at the word of command vomit flames and pour destruction upon all who approached it. Besides the two forts of St. Maria and St. Philip, which ter-

minated the bridge on either shore, and besides the two wooden bastions on the bridge itself, which were filled with soldiers and defended by guns on all four sides, each of the two and thirty vessels contained further thirty armed men with four sailors for its protection, and shewed the muzzle of a cannon to the enemy, whether he came up from Zealand or down from Antwerp. There were in all ninety seven cannon, which were distributed beneath and above the bridge, and more than 1500 men, who were posted partly in the forts, partly in the vessels, and in case of necessity could maintain a terrible fire of small arms upon the enemy.

But by this alone the Duke did not consider his work safe against all accidents. It was to be expected that the enemy would leave nothing unattempted to burst the middle and weakest part of the bridge by the force of his machines; to obviate this he threw across, in line with the bridge of boats and at some distance from it, another distinct defence, which was to break the force that might be directed against the bridge itself. This work consisted of 33 vessels of considerable magnitude, which were moored in a row athwart the stream, and fastened to one another with masts, three and three, so that they formed eleven different groups. Each of these like a file of pikemen presented in a horizontal direction, 14 long wooden poles, which opposed iron heads to the approaching enemy. These

vessels were filled merely with ballast, and were anchored each by a double but slack cable, in order to be able to give to the rise of the river, whence also they were in constant motion, and thus got the name of «Swimmers». The whole bridge of boats and also a part of the piers was covered by these «Swimmers», which were stationed as well above as below the bridge. In addition to all these defensive preparations there was besides a fleet to the number of forty men of war, which were stationed on both coasts, and served as a protection to the whole work. This astonishing work was finished in March 1784, the seventh month of the siege, and the day on which it was completed was kept as a jubilee by the troops. The great event was announced to the besieged town by a ringing feu de joie, and the army as if to enjoy ocular demonstration of its triumph, extended itself along the whole platform to gaze upon the proud stream, peacefully and obediently flowing under the yoke, which had been imposed upon it. All the endless labours, which they had undergone, were forgotten in beholding this spectacle, and not a man, whose hand had been in any manner whatever employed in it, however contemptible or insignificant he was, but assumed to himself a portion of the honor, which rewarded the illustrious Author. But nothing could equal the consternation, which seized the citizens of Antwerp, when intelligence was brought them, that

the Scheld was now actually closed, and all access from Zealand cut off. And to increase their dismay they had to learn at the same time the loss of the town of Brussels also, which was at last compelled by famine to capitulate. An attempt, which the Count of Hohenlohe ventured at this very time on Herzogenbusch, in order either to recapture the town or at least to divert the enemy's attention, was likewise unsuccessful, and thus the distressed Antwerp lost at the same time all hope of assistance both by sea and land.

These fatal tidings were diffused through the town by some fugitives, who passed the Spanish videttes and made their way into it, and a spy, who had been sent out by the Burgomaster, to reconnoitre the enemy's works, increased still more the general alarm by his report. He was seized and brought before the Duke of Parma, who commanded him to be conducted everywhere, and shewn the arrangement of the bridge in particular. After this had been done and he was again brought before the General, he sent him back with these words. «Go», said he, «and report what you have seen to those, who sent you. And tell them too that it is my firm resolve, to bury myself under the ruins of this bridge or pass over it into your town.»

But the certainty of danger now at once gave life to the zeal of the Confederates, and it was no fault of their preparations, that the former

half of the above vow was not fulfilled. The Duke had long since seen with apprehension the movements, which were taking place in Zealand for the relief of the town. He was not ignorant that he had to fear the most dangerous blow from this quarter, and that against the combined force of the Zealand and Antwerpian fleets, if they were to fall upon him together and in the proper moment, he could not accomplish much with all his works. For a time the delays of the Zealand Admiral, which he had increased by all the means in his power, procured him security; but now the urgent necessity at once accelerated the expedition, and without waiting longer for the Admiral, the States at Middelburg despatched the Count Justin of Nassau, with as many ships as they could muster, to the assistance of the besieged. This fleet took up a position before the Fort of Liefkenshoek, which was in possession of the enemy, and supported by a few vessels from the opposite fort of Lillo cannonaded it with such success, that the walls were in a short time demolished and carried by storm. The Walloons, who formed the garrison did not shew the firmness, which might have been expected from soldiers of the Duke of Parma; they shamefully surrendered the fort to the enemy, who in a short time got possession of the whole island of Doel, with all the redoubts situated upon it. The loss of these places, which were however soon recovered, incensed

the Duke of Parma so much, that he brought the Commanding Officers before a Court Martial, and caused the most culpable among them to be beheaded. Meanwhile this important conquest opened to the Zealanders a free passage as far as the bridge, and the moment was now come to execute a decisive stroke against this work as was preconcerted with the Antwerpians. It was agreed that, while the bridge of boats was blown up by machines already prepared in Antwerp, the Zealand fleet should be in the vicinity, with a sufficient supply of provisions, so as to sail to the town through the opening.

For before the Duke of Parma had completed his bridge, an Engineer, within the walls of Antwerp, was already labouring for its destruction. The name of this man was Frederick Gianibelli, whom fate had destined to be the Archimedes of the town, and to exhaust in its defence, equal skill with the like want of success. He was born in Mantua, and had formerly made his appearance in Madrid, some say, to offer his services to king Philip in the Netherlandish war. But wearied with long waiting, the offended engineer left the Court, with the intention of making the King of Spain sensibly acquainted with talents, which he had so little known how to appreciate. He sought service with Queen Elisabeth of England, the declared foe of Spain, who after she had seen a few specimens of his skill sent him to Antwerp. He took up

his residence in that town, and, in the present extremity, devoted to it all his knowledge and the most ardent zeal.

As soon as this Artist perceived that the bridge was seriously intended and that the work approached completion, he applied to the Magistracy for three large vessels, from 150 to 500 tons, in which he intended to place mines. Besides these he demanded also sixty Playten which were to be fastened together with cables and chains, and furnished with projecting grappling irons, and with the ebbing of the tide to be put in motion, and to give full effect to the operation of the mine ships, to be sent against the bridge in a cuneiform order. But he had applied to persons, who were quite incapable of comprehending an idea out of the common way, and even where the salvation of their country was at stake, could not forget their mercantile spirit. His scheme was considered altogether too expensive, and he with difficulty at last obtained the grant of two smaller vessels from 70 to 80 tons with a number of flat bottomed vessels.

With these two vessels, one of which he called the «Fortune» and the other the «Hope» he proceeded in the following manner. He caused a hollow magazine of freestone to be built in the hold of each, five feet broad, three and a half high, and forty long. This magazine he filled with sixty hundred weight of the finest priming powder, of his own compounding, and

covered it with large gravestones and millstones, as heavy as the vessels could carry. Over these he further added a roof of similar stones, which ran up to a point and projected six feet above the ship's side. The roof itself was crammed with iron chains and hooks, with knives, nails and other destructive missiles; the remaining space in the vessels, which was not occupied by the magazine was likewise filled up with planks. Several small apertures were left in the magazine itself for the matches, which were to set fire to the mine. For greater certainty there was besides a piece of mechanism constructed, which after the expiration of a given time would strike out sparks, and even if the matches failed, would set the ship on fire. In order to make the enemy believe, that it was intended with these machines only to set the bridge on fire, a firework of brimstone and pitch was placed in the top, which could burn a whole hour. Nay, in order still more to divert the enemy's attention from the proper seat of danger, he prepared further thirty two small flat-bottomed boats, upon which there were only fire-works burning, and which had no other object, but to deceive the enemy. These fireships were to be sent down upon the bridge, at intervals of half an hour, in four separate squadrons, and keep the enemy incessantly engaged for two whole hours, so that at last tired of firing, and wearied by vain expectation, they might relax

in their vigilance, when the real volcanoes came. Before them, he, in addition to all this, despatched a few vessels in which powder was concealed, in order to blow up the loose work before the bridge, and make a passage for the two principal ships. At the same time he hoped by this preliminary attack to engage the enemy's attention, to draw them out and expose them to the full deadly effect of the Volcano.

The night between the 4th and 5th April was fixed for the execution of this great undertaking. An obscure rumour of it had already diffused itself through the Spanish camp, and particularly from the circumstance of many divers from Antwerp having been detected, in endeavouring to cut asunder the cables of the vessels. They were prepared therefore for a serious attack; they only mistook the real nature of it, and counted on having to fight rather with men than elements. With this view the Duke caused the guards to be doubled along the whole shore, and drew up the chief part of his troops in the vicinity of the bridge, where he was present in person; thus meeting the danger while endeavouring to avoid it. No sooner was it dark, when three burning vessels were seen to float down from the city towards the bridge, then three more, and directly after the same number. They beat to arms in the Spanish camp, and the whole length of the bridge was filled with armed men. Meantime the number of the fireships increased, and

they came in regular order down the stream, sometimes two, and sometimes three abreast, being at first steered by sailors. The Admiral of the Antwerpian fleet, Jacob Jacobson, whether designedly or through carelessness was not known, had committed the error of sending off the four squadrons of fireships too quickly one after another, and caused the two large mine-ships also to follow them too soon, by which the whole arrangement was disturbed.

Meanwhile the array of vessels kept approaching, and the darkness of night still further heightened the extraordinary spectacle. As far as eye could follow the stream all was fire, and the fireships emitted a light as strong as if they themselves were in flames. Far and wide shone the surface of the water; the dams and forts along the shore, the flags, arms and accoutrements of the soldiers, who were drawn up both there and on the bridge, were brightly reflected back. With a mingled sensation of awe and pleasure, the soldiers watched the unusual sight, which rather resembled a fête than a hostile preparation, but from the very strangeness of the contrast filled the mind with a mysterious awe. When this burning fleet had come within 2000 paces of the bridge, those, who were directing it, lighted the matches, impelled the two mine-vessels into the middle of the stream, and left the others to the sport of the waves, while they hastily made their escape on skiffs, which had been kept in readiness.

The line of vessels now became entangled and destitute of steersmen; they arrived singly and separately at the swimming works, where they either remained hanging or were obliquely repelled on the shore. The foremost powder vessels, which were intended to set fire to the swimming works, were cast by the force of a squall, which arose at that instant, on the Flanders coast, one of the two fireships, even that which was called the "Fortune", grounded in its passage, before it reached the bridge, and killed by its explosion, some Spanish soldiers, who here at work in a neighbouring battery. It almost happened that the other and larger fireship, called the "Hope", experienced the same fate. The stream cast it on the swimming defence on the Flanders side, where it remained hanging; and had it taken fire at that moment the greatest part of its effect would have been lost. Deceived by the flames, which this machine, like the other vessels, emitted, the Spaniards took it for a common fireship, which was intended to set fire to the bridge of boats. And as the fireships were seen one after the other to extinguish without further effect, all fears were at last dispelled, and the Spaniards began to ridicule the preparations of the enemy, which had been ushered in with so much display and now had so absurd an end. Some of the boldest threw themselves into the stream, in order to get a close view of the fireship and extinguish it, when from its weight it forced itself a passage,

burst the swimming work, which detained it, and came down on the bridge of boats with a force, which gave reason to fear the worst. At once all was excitement and the Duke called to the sailors to keep the vessel off with poles, and put out the flames before they caught to the timbers. He was at this critical moment at the farthest end of the left pier, where it formed a bastion in the water and joined the bridge of boats. By his side were standing the Margrave of Rysburg, General of cavalry and Governor of the province of Artois, who had formerly served the States but from a protector of the republic had become its worst enemy; the Baron of Billy, Governor of Friesland and Commander of the German regiments; the generals Cajetan and Guasto, with several of the principal officers; all forgetting their individual danger and entirely occupied with averting the general calamity. Just then a Spanish ensign approached the Duke of Parma, and conjured him to remove from a place, where his life was threatened with manifest peril. As the Duke did not attend to this request, he repeated it still more urgently, and at last fell at his feet and implored him in this single matter to take advice from his servant. While he said this he had laid hold of the Duke's coat, as though he wished forcibly to draw him away from the spot, and the latter more through surprise at the man's boldness, than persuaded by his arguments, at last retired to the shore attended by Cajetan

and Guasto. He had hardly time to reach the fort St. Maria at the furthest end of the bridge, when an explosion took place behind him just as if the earth was bursting and the vault of Heaven falling in. The Duke fell to the ground like dead, and the whole army with him, and several minutes elapsed before they regained their senses.

But what a sight presented itself, when they came to themselves! From the shock of the mine, which had exploded, the Scheld was divided to its lowest depth and driven with a surge, which rose like a wall above the dam, which confined it, so that all the fortifications on the shore were under water several feet deep. The earth shook for three miles in circumference. Nearly the whole left pier, on which the fireship had been hanging with a part of the bridge of boats was burst, blown to pieces, and with all that was upon it, spars, cannon, and men, driven into the air. Even the vast masses of stone, which covered the mine had been hurled by the force of the explosion into the neighbouring fields, so that many of them afterwards were dug out of the ground a thousand paces off from the bridge. Six vessels were consumed, several had gone to pieces. But more terrible still was the destruction, which the murderous machine had produced amongst the soldiers. Five hundred, according to other reports even eight hundred, were sacrificed to its fury, not to reckon those who

escaped with mutilated or otherwise injured limbs; and the most opposite kinds of death were combined in this frightful moment. Some were consumed by the flame of the explosion, others scalded by the boiling water of the river, others again were stifled by the poisonous vapour of the brimstone; some were engulfed in the stream, others buried under the hail of projected stones, many were lacerated by the knives and hooks, or crushed by the balls, which were driven from the belly of the machine. Some, who were found lifeless without any visible injury, must have been killed by the mere concussion of the air. The spectacle, which presented itself directly after the firing of the mine, was fearful. Some of the men were wedged between the palisades of the bridge, others were struggling to free themselves from under masses of stone, others again remained hanging in the rigging of the ships; from all places and quarters a heart rending cry for help arose, but which, as each had enough to do to take care of himself, was answered only by a helpless wailing.

Many of the survivors owed their escape to surprising good fortune. One officer, named Tucci, was carried by the whirlwind, like a feather, into the air, where he was held for a moment suspended on high, and was then gradually let fall into the river, where he saved himself by swimming. Another was taken up by the force of the blast from the Flanders shore,

and transferred to the Brabant side, where he arose with a slight contusion on the shoulder, and he felt, as he afterwards said, during this rapid aerial transit, just as if he had been fired out of a cannon. The Duke of Parma himself had never been so near death, as at that moment, for his life was saved by only half a minute. He had scarce set foot in the fort of St. Maria, when he was raised up as if by a hurricane, and a beam, which struck him on the head and shoulders, stretched him senseless on the earth. For a long time he was believed to be actually killed, because many remembered to have seen him, a few minutes before the fatal explosion, still on the bridge. At last he was found between his attendants Cajetan and Guasto raising himself up with his hand on his sword; a piece of intelligence which reanimated the whole army. But vain would be the attempt to depict his feelings, when he surveyed the devastation, which a single moment had caused in the work of so many months. The bridge of boats, upon which all his hopes rested, was rent asunder, a great part of his army were destroyed, another portion maimed and rendered ineffective for many days; many of his best officers were killed; and as if this visible calamity was not sufficient, he had moreover to hear the painful intelligence, that the Margrave of Rysburg, whom amongst all his officers he prized highest, was nowhere to be found. And yet the worst of all was still

to come, for every moment the fleets of the enemy were to be expected from Antwerp and Lillo, which in this fearful position of the army would find absolutely no resistance at all. The bridge was burst asunder, and nothing prevented the Zealand fleet from passing through it with full sail; while the confusion of the troops in this first moment was so great and general, that it would have been impossible to give or obey orders, as many corps had lost their commanding officers and many commanders their corps; and even the places, where they had been stationed were scarce any longer to be recognised in the general ruin. Add to this that all the batteries on shore were under water, that several cannon were sunk, that the matches were wet and the ammunition damaged by the water. What a moment for the enemy if they had understood how to avail themselves of it!

Historians will hardly be believed, that this success, which surpassed all expectation was lost to Antwerp simply for the reason — that nothing was known of it. St. Aldegonde, indeed, as soon as the explosion of the mine was heard in the town sent out several galleys in the direction of the bridge, with orders to send up fireballs and rockets as soon as they had passed through the bridge, and then to sail with this intelligence straight on to Lillo, in order to bring up, without loss of time, the Zealand fleet, which had been sent to cooperate. At the

same time the Admiral of Antwerp was ordered, upon the above signal being given, to sail out with his vessels and attack the enemy in their first consternation. But although a considerable reward was provided to the boatmen sent to reconnoitre, they did not venture near the enemy, but returned without performing anything and reported, that the bridge of boats was uninjured and the fireship had had no effect. On the day following also no better measures were taken to learn the true state of the bridge; and as the fleet at Lillo, in spite of the favorable wind, was seen to remain inactive, the belief that the fireships had accomplished nothing, was confirmed. It occurred to no one, that this very inactivity of the confederates, which led the Antwerpians into error, might also detain the Zealanders at Lillo as in fact, it did. Such an enormous oversight could have been committed only by a government, which to the loss of all dignity and all independence, took counsel with the multitude, which it ought to have governed. The more supine, however, that they were against the enemy, the more violently did they give vent to their fury against Gianibelli, whom the frantic mob wanted to tear in pieces. For two days this Artist hovered in the most evident danger, until at last on the third morning a courier from Lillo, who had swum under the bridge brought authentic intelligence of its having been destroyed

but at the same time announced that it had been repaired.

This rapid restoration of the bridge was a real miracle of the Duke of Parma's performing. Scarce had he recovered from the shock, which seemed to overthrow all his plans, when he contrived with wonderful presence of mind to prevent all its evil consequences. The enemy's fleets remaining away in this decisive moment revived his hopes anew. As yet the evil plight of the bridge appeared to be a secret to them, and though it was plainly impossible, to repair in a few hours, the work of so many months, yet a great point would be gained if this could be done even in appearance. All were obliged to labour in removing the ruins, in setting up again the beams, which had been thrown down, replacing those which were broken, and filling up the chasms with ships. The Duke himself did not decline sharing in the toil and his example was followed by all his officers. Stimulated by this popular behaviour, the common soldiers exerted themselves to the utmost; the work was carried on during the whole night under the constant sounding of drums and trumpets, which were distributed along the whole bridge to drown the noise of the work-people. With dawn of day few traces remained of the night's havoc and although the bridge was restored only in appearance, its aspect nevertheless deceived the spy and no attack was made. Meantime the

Duke gained time to make the repairs solid, nay, even to introduce some essential alterations in the structure of the bridge. In order to guard against similar accidents for the future, a part of the bridge of boats was made moveable, so that in case of necessity it could be taken away and a passage opened to the fireships. The loss, which he had suffered in men, the Duke supplied from the garrisons of the adjoining places, and by a German regiment, which joined him very opportunely from Gueldres. He filled up the vacancies of the officers, who were killed, in doing which he did not forget the Spanish Ensign, who had saved his life.

The Antwerpians after learning the success of their mineship, now did homage to the inventor with as much extravagance, as they had a short time before mistrusted him, and they encouraged his genius to new attempts. Gianibelli now actually obtained the number of flat-bottomed vessels, which he had at first vainly demanded, and these he equipped in such a manner, that they struck with irresistible force on the bridge, and a second time also burst and separated it. But this time the wind was contrary to the Zealand fleet, so that they could not put out, and thus the Duke again obtained the necessary respite to repair the damage. The Archimedes of Antwerp was not deterred by any of these disappointments. He fitted out anew large two vessels, which were armed with iron hooks and similar instruments in order to

tear asunder the bridge. But when it came to the point to get these vessels under way, nobody was to be found, who would embark in them. The Artist was therefore obliged to think of a plan, for giving to these machines such a self impulse, that, without being guided by a steersman, they would keep the middle of the stream, and not like the former ones be driven by the wind on shore. One of his workmen, a German, here fell upon a strange invention, if Strada's description of it is to be credited. He affixed a sail under the vessel, which was acted upon by the water just as an ordinary sail is by the wind, and thus could impel the ship with the whole force of the current. The result proved too that he had judged rightly, for this vessel, with the position of its sails reversed, not only followed the proper centre of the stream with great rapidity, but also ran against the bridge with so much force, that the enemy had not time to open it, and it was actually burst asunder. But all these results were of no service to the town, because the attempts were made at random, and were supported by no adequate force. A new fireship, which Gianibelli equipped like the former, which had succeeded so well, and which he filled with 4000 lbs of the finest powder, was not even used at all, because it now occurred to the Antwerprians to seek their deliverance in another way.

Terrified by so many futile attempts from en-

deavouring to clear a passage for vessels on the river by force, they at last came to the determination of doing without the stream entirely. The example of the town of Leyden was called to mind, which ten years previously, when besieged by the Spaniards, found safety by opportunely inundating the fields, and it was resolved to imitate this example. Between Lillo and Stabroek, in the district of Bergen, a wide and somewhat sloping plain extends as far as Antwerp, and is protected against the encroaching water of the East Scheld only by numerous embankments and counter-embankments. All that was required was to break these dams, when the whole plain would become a sea and might be navigated with flat-bottomed vessels almost up to the walls of Antwerp. If this attempt succeeded the Duke of Parma might keep the Scheld guarded, as long as he pleased, with his bridge of boats; a new river was formed for the time which, in case of necessity, would be equally serviceable. It was this very thing too, which the Prince of Orange had, at the first commencement of the siege recommended and in which he had been strenuously but unsuccessfully seconded by St. Aldegonde, as some citizens could not be persuaded to sacrifice their fields. In the present emergency they reverted to this last resource, but circumstances had in the interim greatly altered.

The above-mentioned plain is intersected by a broad and high dam, which takes its name from

the adjacent castle of Cowenstein and extends for three miles from the village of Stabroek in Bergen as far as the Scheld, with the great dam of which it unites near Ordam. Beyond this dam no vessels can proceed, however high the tide, and the sea would be vainly turned into the fields, as long as such an embankment remained in the way, which would prevent the Zealand vessels from descending into the plain before Antwerp. The fate of the town therefore depended upon this Cowenstein dam being demolished or cut through; but the Duke of Parma, foreseeing this, had, immediately on commencing the blockade, taken possession of it and spared no preparations to maintain it to the last. At the village of Stabroek the Count of Mansfeld was encamped with the greatest part of the army, and by means of this very Cowenstein dam, kept open the communication with the bridge, the Headquarters, and the Spanish Magazines at Calloo. Thus the army formed an uninterrupted line from Stabroek in Brabant, as far as Bevern in Flanders, intersected indeed by the Scheld, but not interrupted by it, and which could not be broken without a sanguinary conflict. On the dam itself, within proper distances, five different batteries were erected, the command of which was given to the most valiant officers in the Army. Nay, as the Duke of Parma could not doubt, that now the whole fury of the war would be turned in this direc-

tion, he entrusted the defence of the bridge to the Count of Mansfeld, and resolved to defend this important post himself. Now, therefore, the war assumed quite a different aspect and the theatre of it was entirely changed.

The Netherlanders had, both above and below Lillo, cut through in several places the dam, which follows the Brabant shore of the Scheld, and where a short time before green fields appeared, a new element now presented itself, crowded with boats and covered with projecting masts. A Zealand fleet commanded by Count Hohenlohe, navigated the inundated fields, and made repeated movements against the Cowenstein dam, without however seriously attacking it; while another fleet shewed itself in the Scheld, threatening the two coasts alternately with a landing, and an attack upon the bridge of boats. For several days this manoeuvre was practised on the enemy, who, uncertain of the quarter whence an attack was to be expected, would, it was hoped, be exhausted by continual watching, and by degrees lulled into security by such frequent false alarms. The Antwerpians had promised to Count Hohenlohe to support the attack on the dam by a flotilla from the town; three beacons on the principal tower were to be the signal, that this was on the way. When therefore in a dark night the expected columns of fire really ascended above Antwerp, Count Hohenlohe immediately caused 500 of his troops to scale

the dam between two of the enemy's redoubts, who surprised part of the Spanish garrison asleep and cut down others, who attempted to defend themselves. In a short time they had gained a firm footing upon the dam, and were just in the act of bringing up the remaining body of troops, 2000 in number, when the Spaniards in the next redoubts marched out, and favoured by the narrowness of the ground, made a desperate attack on the dense numbers of the enemy. And as now, at the same time, the guns began to play upon the approaching fleet, and rendered the landing of the remaining troops impossible, and no assistance shewed itself from the town, the Zealanders were overpowered after a short conflict, and again driven down from the dam of which they had got possession. The victorious Spaniards pursued them through the water as far as their boats, sunk many of the latter, and compelled the rest to retreat with heavy loss. Count Hohenlohe threw the blame of this defeat upon the inhabitants of Antwerp, who had deceived them by a false signal, and it certainly could only be attributed to the faulty arrangement of both parties that this attempt had no better success.

But at last the allies determined to make a systematic assault on the enemy with their combined forces, and put an end to the siege by a grand attack, as well on the dam as on the bridge. The 16th May 1585, was fixed upon

for the execution of this design, and both armies used their utmost endeavours to make this day decisive. The Dutch and Zealanders, in conjunction with the Antwerpians assembled more than 200 vessels, to man which they stripped their towns and citadels of troops, and with this force they purposed attacking the Cowenstein dam from two opposite sides. At the same time the bridge over the Scheld was to be assailed with new machines of Gianibelli's invention and the Duke of Parma thereby hindered from sending relief to the dam.

Alexander, apprised of the danger, which threatened him, spared nothing on his side to meet it effectually. He had, immediately after getting possession of the dam, caused redoubts to be erected at five different places, and had given the command of them to the most experienced officers of the army. The first of these, which was called the Cross battery, was erected on the spot, where the Cowenstein dam enters the great embankment of the Scheld and with the latter makes the form of a cross; the Spaniard Mondragon was appointed Commander of this battery. A thousand paces from this, near the castle of Cowenstein, was constructed the battery of St. James, which was entrusted to the command of Camillo de Monte. At an equal distance from this followed the battery of St. George, and at a thousand paces from the latter the Pile battery, under the orders of Gamboa,

which had its name from the pile work on which it rested; at the farthest end of the dam, near **Stabroek**, a fifth redoubt was situated, where the Count of Mansfeld with an Italian, **Capizucchi**, commanded. All these forts the Duke now caused to be strengthened with fresh artillery and men, and in addition to this, on both sides of the dam, and along the whole extent of the same, he caused piles to be driven in, as well to render the main embankment firmer, as to impede the labour of the pioneers, who were to dig through it.

Early on the morning of the 16th of May the enemy's forces put themselves in motion. With the dusk of dawn there came floating down from **Lillo**, across the inundated country, four burning vessels, by which the guards upon the dams, who recollected the former terrible explosion, were so alarmed, that they hastily retired to the next battery. This was exactly what the enemy aimed at. In these vessels, which had merely the appearance of fireships, lay soldiers concealed, who now suddenly jumped ashore, and succeeded in mounting the dam at the undefended spot, between the **St. George** and **Pile** batteries. Immediately after the whole **Zealand** fleet shewed itself, consisting of numerous men of war, transports, and a crowd of smaller craft which were laden with great sacks of earth, wool, fascines, gabions and the like, in order at once to throw up a breastwork, where requisite. The men of

war were furnished with powerful artillery, and numerously and bravely manned, and a whole army of pioneers accompanied it, in order to dig through the dam as soon as they got possession of it.

The Zealanders had scarce begun on their side to ascend the dam, when the Antwerpian fleet advanced from *Osterweel* and assailed it on the other. A high breastwork was hastily thrown up between the two nearest hostile batteries, which was intended to divide the two garrisons and cover the pioneers. The latter, several hundreds in number, now fell to work on both sides the dam with their spades and dug with such energy, that hopes were entertained of soon seeing the two seas united. But meanwhile the Spaniards also had gained time to hasten to the spot from the two nearest redoubts and make a spirited assault, while the guns from the battery of *St. George* played uninterruptedly on the enemy's fleet. A furious battle now raged in the quarter, where they were cutting through the dike and throwing up the breastwork. The Zealanders had drawn a strong line of troops round the pioneers, that the enemy might not interrupt their work; and in this confusion of battle, in the midst of a storm of bullets from the enemy, often up to the breast in water, among the dead and dying, the pioneers pursued their work, under the incessant exhortations of the merchants, who impatiently waited to see the

dam opened and their vessels in safety. The importance of the result, which it might be said entirely depended upon their spades, appeared to animate even the common labourers with heroic courage. Solely intent upon their task, they neither saw nor heard the work of death, which was going on around them, and as fast as the foremost ranks fell, those behind them pressed into their places. The piles, which had been driven in, impeded them greatly in their labour, but the attacks of the Spaniards hindered them still more, for these threw themselves with desperate courage into the masses of the enemy, stabbed the pioneers in the pits, where they were digging, and filled up again with dead bodies the cavities, which the living had made. At last however, when most of their officers were killed or wounded, while the number of the enemy incessantly increased, and fresh labourers constantly supplied the place of those, who had been slain, the courage of these valiant troops sank, and they thought it adviseable to retreat to their batteries. Now therefore the Zealanders and Antwerpians, saw themselves masters of the whole extent of the dam, from fort St. George as far as the Pile battery. As, however, it seemed to them much too long to wait for the thorough demolition of the dam, they unloaded in haste a Zealand transport, and brought the cargo over the dam to an Antwerpian vessel, which Count Hohenlohe carried in triumph to

Antwerp. This sight at once filled the distressed town with the most joyful hopes, and as if the victory was already won, they gave themselves up to the wildest exultation. All the bells were rung, all the cannon discharged, and the inhabitants, beside themselves with joy, ran impatiently to the Osterweel gate, in order to meet the storeships, which were supposed to be coming.

In fact fortune had never been so favourable to the besieged as at that moment. The enemy had thrown themselves into their batteries exhausted and dispirited, and far from being able to struggle with the victors for the post they had conquered, they rather found themselves besieged in the places, where they had taken refuge. Some companies of Scotchmen led by their brave Colonel, Balfour, attacked the battery of St. George, which Camillo of Monte, who hastened thither from the St. James' battery, relieved, but not without severe loss. The Pile battery was in a much worse condition, which was hotly cannonaded by the ships and threatened every moment to crumble to pieces; Gamboa, who commanded it, lay wounded, and it was unfortunately deficient in artillery to keep the enemy at a distance. Add to this that the breastwork, which the Zealanders had thrown up between this battery and that of St. George, cut off all assistance from the Scheld. If therefore advantage had been taken of this weakness and inactivity of the enemy, to continue cutting

through the dam with zeal and perseverance, there is no doubt that a passage would have been made and by this means the whole siege terminated. But here also the want of consistency shewed itself, which must be charged upon the Antwerpians during the whole course of the siege. The zeal, with which the work had been commenced, cooled in proportion to the success, which attended it. It was soon found much too tedious and wearisome to dig through the dike; it was deemed better to transfer the cargoes from the large storeships into smaller vessels, and carry these to the town with the floodtide. St. Aldegonde and Hohenlohe instead of animating the industry of the workmen by their personal presence, left the scene of action exactly in the decisive moment, to sail to the town with a corn-vessel and there receive encomiums on their wisdom and valour.

While both parties were fighting on the dam with the most obstinate fury, the bridge over the Scheld had been attacked from Antwerp, with new machines, in order to engage the attention of the Duke in that quarter, and he hastened as soon as he saw the bridge clear, to relieve the dam himself. Attended by two hundred Spanish pikemen he flew to the place of attack and appeared at the spot, where they were fighting, just in time to prevent the complete defeat of his troops. He hastily posted some guns, which he had brought with him, in the two nearest re-

doubts, and caused a heavy fire to be n from thence upon the enemy's ships. self took post at the head of his sold with his sword in one hand and shie other, led them against the enemy. T of his arrival which quickly spread t end of the dam to the other, revived courage of his troops, and the conflic menced with renewed violence, made s murderous by the nature of the groun it was fought. Upon the narrow ridg dam, which in many places was not n nine paces broad, about five thousand co were fighting, so confined was the sp which the strength of both armies was a: and where the whole issue of the sieg stake. To the Antwerpians the last bu their town was at stake and for the : it decided the whole success of their unc Both parties fought with a courage, wl pair alone could inspire. From both ti mities of the dam the tide of war rol towards the centre, where the Zealan Antwerpians had the advantage and wl they had collected their whole strength. The Italians and Spaniards inflamed by a noble emulation pressed on from Stabroek; and from the Scheld the Walloons and Spaniards advanced with the general at their head. While the former endea- voured to relieve the Pile battery, which the enemy hotly pressed both by land and from the

e latter assailed the breastwork, between
 George and the Pile batteries, with a
 hich overthrew everything. Here the
 of the Netherlandish troops fought be-
 well fortified rampart, and the guns of
 fleets covered this important post. The
 as already pressing forward to attack
 nidable defence with his small army,
 was reported to him, that the Italians
 iards, under Capizucchi and Aquila,
 ed their way, sword in hand, into the
 ery, had got possession of it and were
 ewise advancing against the enemy's
 rk. Before this last entrenchment there-
 whole force of both armies now col-
 self, and both sides used their utmost
 o carry and to defend this position. The
 iders on board the fleet, not to remain
 e spectators of the conflict, sprang ashore
 ir vessels. Alexander attacked the
 rk on one side, Count Mansfeld on
 r; five assaults were made and five times
 re driven back. The Netherlanders in
 isive moment outdid themselves; never
 in the whole course of the war had they fought
 with such determination. But it was the Scotch
 and English in particular, who baffled the attempts
 of the enemy by their valiant resistance. As no
 one would advance to the attack in the direction,
 where the Scotch fought, the Duke himself, led
 on the troops with a javelin in his hand, and up

to the breast in water. At last after a protracted struggle the forces of Count Mansfeld succeeded with their halberds and pikes, in making a breach in the breastwork, and by raising themselves on one another's shoulders, in scaling the parapet. Barthelemy Toralva, a Spanish Captain, was the first, who shewed himself on the top and just about the same time the Italian Capizucchi, appeared upon the edge also; and thus the contest of valour was decided with equal glory for both nations. It is worthy of remark in what manner the Duke of Parma, who was made arbiter of this emulous strife, was accustomed to manage the delicate sense of his warriors. He embraced the Italian Capizucchi in presence of the troops and acknowledged aloud, that it was principally to the courage of this officer that he owed the capture of the breastwork. He caused the Spanish Captain Toralva, who was dangerously wounded to be conveyed to his own quarters at Stabroek, had his wounds dressed on his own bed and robed him in the same garment, which he himself had worn the day before the battle.

After the capture of the breastwork the victory did not long remain doubtful. The Dutch and Zealand troops, who had disembarked to come to close action with the enemy, at once lost their courage, when they looked about them and saw the vessels, which were their last refuge, putting off from shore. 1911 77

For the tide began to ebb, and the Commanders of the fleet from fear of being stranded with their heavy transports and, in case of an unfortunate issue to the engagement, becoming the prey of the enemy, retired from the dam and made for deep water. No sooner did Alexander perceive this, than he pointed out the flying vessels to his troops and encouraged them to finish the action with an enemy, who despaired of their safety. The Dutch allies were the first who gave way, and their example was soon followed by the Zealanders. They hastily threw themselves down from the dam in order to reach the vessels by wading or swimming; but as their retreat took place in the greatest disorder, they impeded one another and fell in heaps under the swords of the pursuers. Many perished even in the boats, as each strove to get before the other, and several vessels sank under the weight of those, who threw themselves on board. The Antwerpians, who fought for their liberty, their hearths, their faith, were the last who retreated, but this very circumstance augmented their disaster. Many of their vessels were outstripped by the ebb-tide and grounded, so that they were reached by the enemy's cannon and destroyed with all on board. The crowds of fugitives endeavoured to swim to the other transports, which had got into deep water; but the fury and daring of the Spaniards went so far, that they swam after them with their swords between


their teeth, and dragged many even out of the vessels. The victory of the royal troops was complete but bloody; for of the Spaniards about 800, of the Netherlanders some thousands (not to reckon those who were drowned) were left on the field, and on both sides many of the principal nobility were missing. More than thirty vessels, with a great supply of provisions, which had been intended for Antwerp, fell into the hands of the victors with 150 cannon and other military stores. The dam, the passage of which was so dearly defended, was pierced in thirteen different places and the bodies of those who had cut through it, were now used to stop up the openings.

The following day a transport of immense size and singular construction, fell into the hands of the Royalists. It represented a floating castle and had been destined for the attack on the Cowenstein dam. The Antwerpians had built it at an immense expense, at the very time when the Engineer Gianibelli's useful proposals had been rejected on account of the cost they entailed, and this ridiculous monster was called by the proud title of «End of the War», which it afterwards exchanged for the far more fitting sobriquet of, the «Money lost»! When this vessel was launched it turned out, as every sensible person had foretold, that on account of its unwieldy size it was utterly impossible to steer it, and it could hardly be floated by the highest

tide. With great difficulty it was worked as far as Ordam, where, deserted by the tide, it went aground and fell a prey to the enemy.

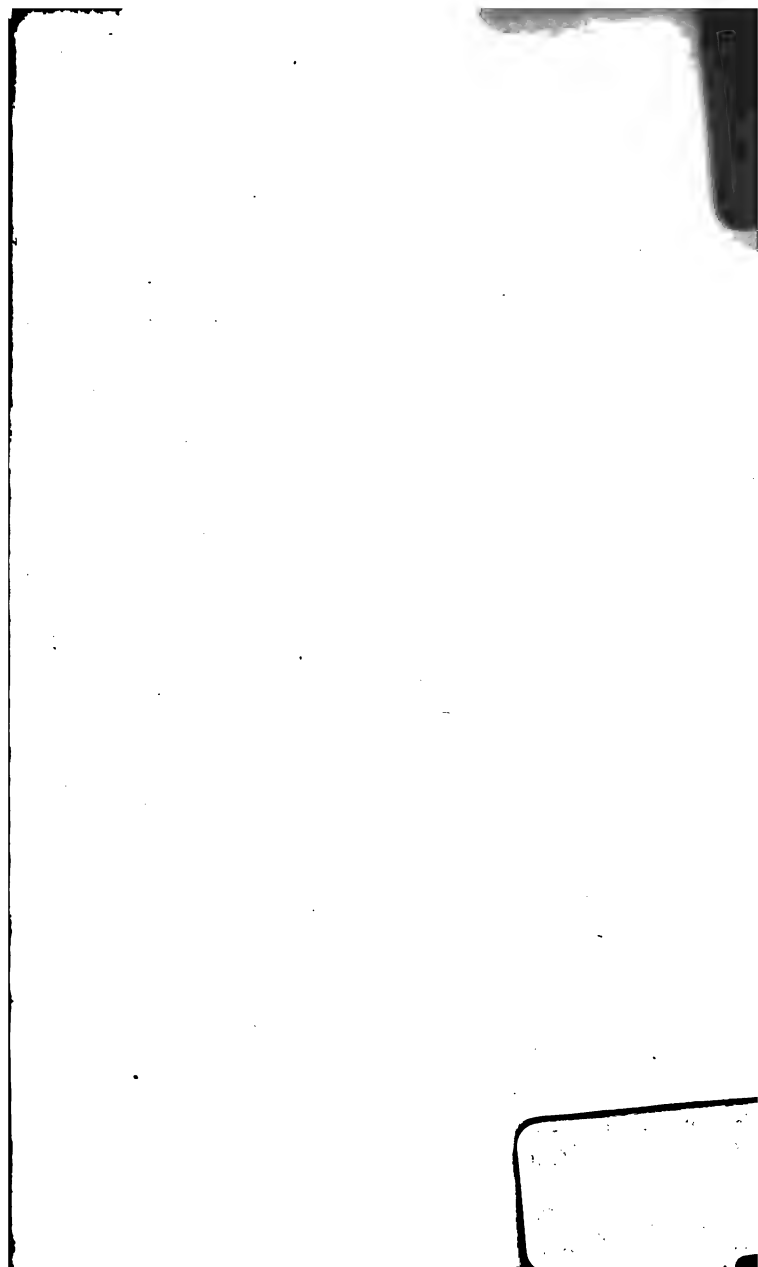
The attack upon the Cowenstein dam was the last attempt, which was ventured in defence of Antwerp. From this time the courage of the besieged sank, and the Magistracy of the town, vainly laboured to inspire with distant hopes the lower orders, on whom the present distress weighed heaviest. Hitherto the price of bread had been kept at a tolerable rate, although the quality of it continued to deteriorate; by degrees however provisions became so scarce that a famine was at hand. Still hopes were entertained of holding out the town, at least, until the corn between it and the furthest batteries, which was in full ear, could be reaped; but before that could be done, the enemy had carried the last outwork, and possessed themselves of the whole harvest. At last also the neighbouring and confederate town of Malines fell into the enemy's power and with it vanished the last hope of getting supplies from Brabant. As therefore it appeared no longer possible to increase the stock of provisions, nothing was left but to diminish the consumers. All useless persons, all strangers, nay even the women and children were to be sent away out of the town; but this proposal was altogether too opposed to the feelings of human nature, for it to be carried through. Another proposition to expel the Catholic inha-

bitants exasperated the latter so much that an insurrection was nearly caused. And thus St. Aldegonde at last saw himself compelled to yield to the riotous impatience of the people and on the 17th of August 1585 to treat with the Duke of Parma for the surrender of the town.



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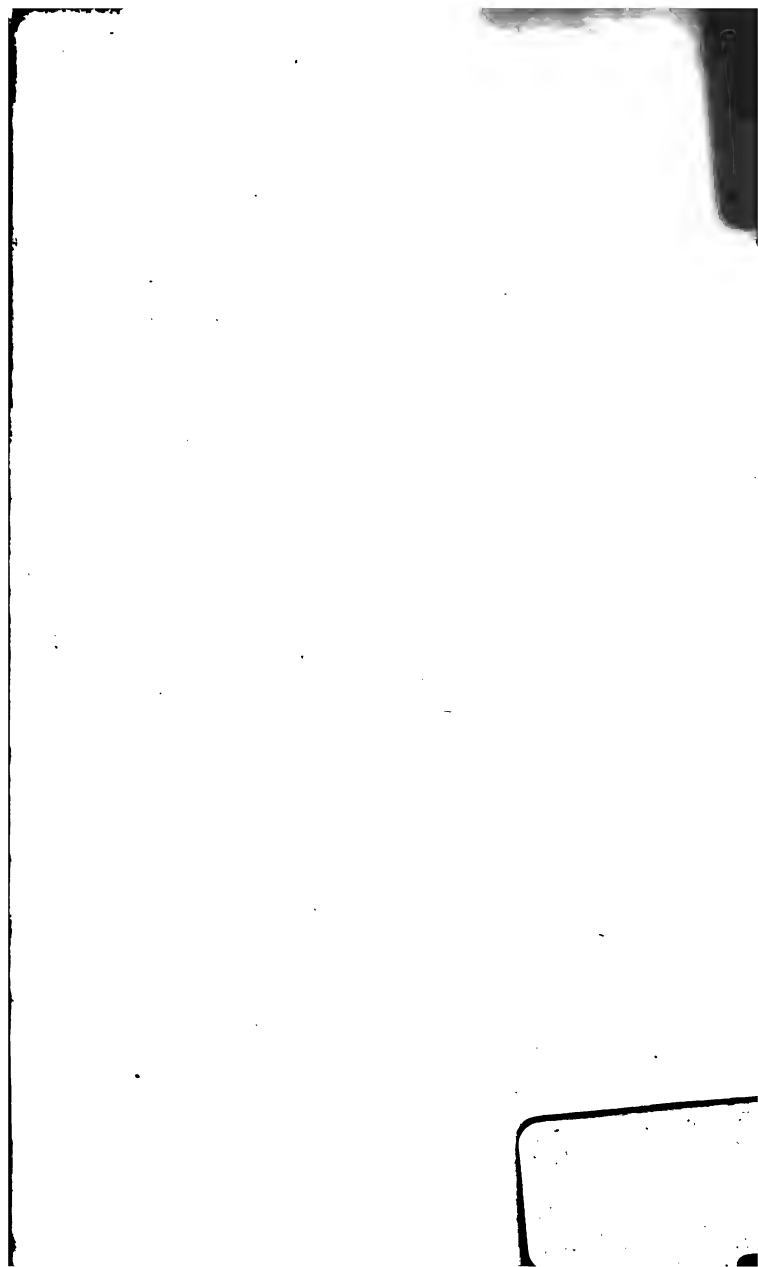
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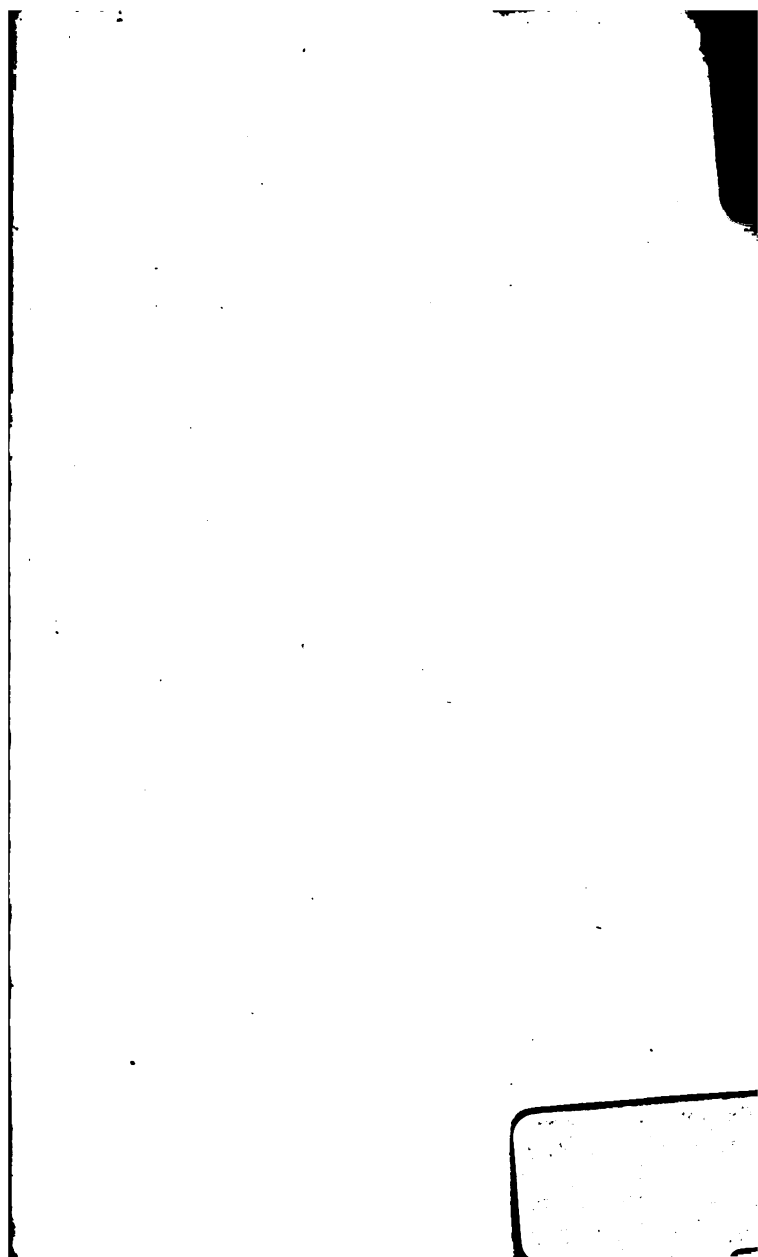
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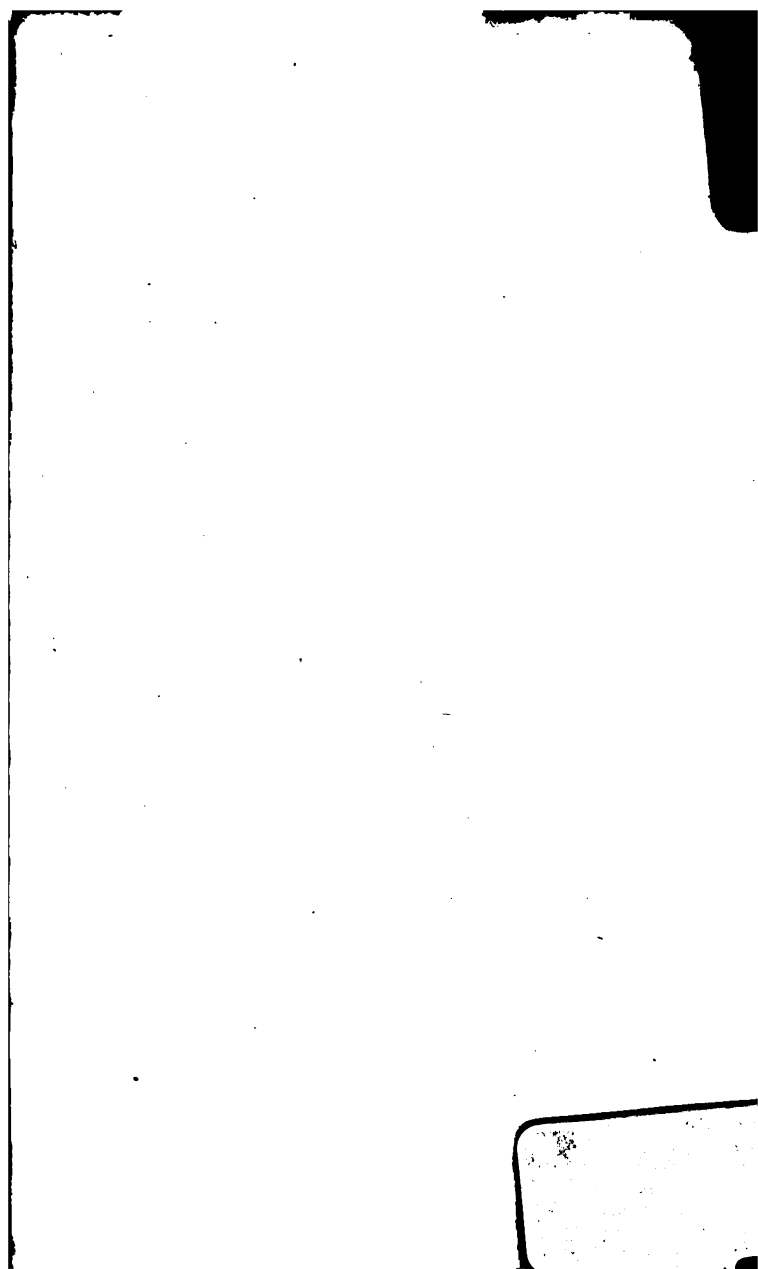
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